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T H E
C O N T R A S T:

O R,

DEATH the greatest | And the greatest MISERY
BLESSING to the | to the Christless Sin-
genuine Christian; | ner;—

W I T H

The Infinite Contrariety between
P O P E R Y A N D P R O T E S T A N T I S M ,

I N R E S P E C T O F

C O M F O R T A B L E N E S S I N D E A T H .

The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death. PROV. xiv. 32

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7.



To the PROTESTANT READER.

*Common
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THESSE Discourses containing no doctrines but those in which all Protestants are agreed, if we may judge of their principles by the established doctrines of the respective Protestant churches,—is the reason of accosting the Reader under the designation of **PROTESTANT**.

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Well, the present Aspects of Providence in these lands are at least a loud call to all Protestants, to be well established in their Protestant profession. To shew Protestants how important their privileges are, they are in the following Sermons directed to view them in the light in which a death-bed will place them.—People in death will make a quite other estimate of things, than they are but too apt to do in the days of their prosperity. It has been a common observation, that it may be good living with corrupt clergymen, but that it is bad dying with them. Mr *Crookshank*, in his History of the Church of Scotland, vol. 2. p. 100. reports concerning the Duke of *Ruthes* as follows: “When he felt the pangs of death, he called for some of his *Lady's* ministers; for it seems his own were good to live with, but not to die with. Accordingly he had the assistance of the Reverend Mr *John Carstairs* and Mr *George Johnstoun*; who dealt with great freedom and faithfulness, rehearsing many wicked acts of his life.—When Mr *Johnstoun* was praying, several noblemen and bishops overhearing him in the next room,—some of the former said to the bishops; *He is a Presbyterian minister that is praying; the d—ane of you can pray as they do, though your prayers would keep a soul from hell.*”—This observation holds eminently true, with respect to Popish clergymen, on a comparison with Protestant ministers.

It is a fearful thing to die under the direction of those who forbid the use of the holy Scriptures; who deny there is any ground for the assurance of faith, or that

any man in this life can be sure whether he be going to heaven or hell when he dies ; whose best cordials are *auricular confession, good works, extreme unction, purgatory*, and the prayers of mercenary priests. It is a blessed and comfortable thing to die under the instruction of those who hold forth the exceeding great and precious promises of God's everlasting covenant, as an effectual relief against all that burdens or perplexes the dying person ; and as a sure ground of the faith and hope of an immediate and direct passage to the land of everlasting bliss.—People may safely judge of a religion, by what grounds of faith and hope, peace and comfort, it lays before persons on a death-bed. Let people consider themselves as on the eve of eternity, and realize the awful import of death ; and they will not hesitate a moment to abhor Popery as the heaviest plague, and to prize Protestantism as the greatest mercy. To lead people to this exercise is the intention of the following Essay, by

JAMES MORISON.

NORHAM, }
Jan. 13. 1779. }

N. B. The Notes concerning Popery, which are mostly too long, or too near each other, for being conveniently placed at the foot of the pages,—are placed at the end, with proper references.

THE



THE CONTRAST, &c.

In FOUR SERMONS,

ON

REV. xiv. 13.

*And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write,
Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from hence-
forth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from
their labours, and their works do follow them.*

SERMON I.

DEATH is either the greatest curse, or the greatest blessing. To all that die in their sins, it is the greatest curse. To all that die in Christ, it is the greatest blessing. It is eminently so, in these last days,—agreeably to the text.

This book of the REVELATION contains a prophecy of the great events that should befall the Church, from John's time to the last judgment. So if it is not the fullest and most minute, it is at least the truest and most extensive history (in prophecy) of the New-Testament Church. It divides the history of the Christian Church into three great periods. Under the emblem of the opening of seven seals, it contains a prophecy of what should befall her under Rome *Pagan*, till Christianity became the legal establishment of the empire; sometime after the beginning of the fourth century. Under the emblem of the sounding of seven trumpets, it contains a prophecy of what should befall her under Rome *Antichristian*,—from the foresaid period, till the begun downfal of Antichrist at the beginning of the Reformation; about the middle of the sixteenth century. Under the emblem of the pouring out of seven vials, it contains a prophecy of what should befall her, from the begun

begun downsal of Antichrist till his final overthrow and the end of time. Only, you will observe, that the seventh seal comprehends under it the seven trumpets and the seven vials,—giving a summary view of what was to fall out under them ; and that the seventh trumpet doth in like manner comprehend under it the seven vials, exhibiting a compendious view of what was to be the state of the Church under them.

We undoubtedly live in the last of these great periods. This chapter, at least from the beginning of the 6th verse, is supposed to refer to it. And the words which we now propose to consider, we apprehend to respect the first five vials in common. So that God is just now saying, with special reference to the times in which we live,—*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth : yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.* In this respect therefore, as well as in general, this must be a subject of the last importance, of the most interesting nature. It is specially to us, that God is proclaiming these good news. And to engage our attention unto them, we are told,—that “ John heard a “ voice from heaven, saying unto him, Write, Blessed “ are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth : “ yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their “ labours, and their works do follow them.” Put it on record,—for the certainty of it, for the interesting nature of it—to living and to dying Christians ; and let them frequently review it, and take the comfort of it.—He is commanded to write the whole of this book, chap. i. 11. But he receives a special command to write this passage,—putting it, as it were, into capital characters.

In this blessed record, we have a most comfortable truth ; the season to which it specially refers, and the strongest confirmation of it.—We shall explain these, and then apply.

In the first place, we have a most comfortable truth ; in these words, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.* And here two things only are necessary to be spoken

spoken to : What it is to die in the Lord, and the blessedness of such as do so.

1st, We shall consider what it is to die in the Lord. To die in the Lord, is to be in him ; to be ripe for death ; and to die in a state of ripeness for death. 1. It is to be in him. To be in Christ, is to be united to him, as the Lord our righteousness,—as the living and life-giving Head, as the fountain of all spiritual life and grace. It is to be united to his person, clothed with his righteousness, and endowed with his Spirit. Thus it is to be brought off all dependence on ourselves, our own righteousnesses, our own doings, exercises or attainments,—to Christ, as the All of our righteousness and salvation. To unite with Christ, is to say,—“ In “the Lord have I righteousness and strength,” Isa. xiv. 24. This is effected by the Spirit’s laying hold of the dead sinner, putting life into him ; and determining him to lay hold of Christ, as having fulfilled all righteousness for him, and as having the fulness of the Spirit of all grace lodged in him for his behoof. “ I follow “after (says Paul), if that I may apprehend that “ for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus,” Phil. iii. 12.—And here lies the very first step of all genuine practical religion. Religion does not immediately lie, in putting on a profession, abounding in religious duties,—nay, nor in being very devout, warm and affectionate in the performance of them. All this may be only a cover to a legal heart ; wedded to self-righteousness, and consequently lying under the power of sin. At best, it is only the superstructure, which is to be built on the good foundation of being brought out of ourselves to Christ. It is excellent, if this good foundation be in the first place laid ; it is naught and will fall to the ground, if it is not.—So the great thing we have to do, in the first place, and indeed all our life-long, in the view of death and an appearance before God,—is to make sure work of being on a right foundation for eternity ; brought off the sandy foundation of a broken covenant of works ;—or, which is the same thing, our own good doings and good

good duties,—and built on the sure foundation which God hath laid in Zion, Christ's finished work.

2. It is to be ripe for death. It is gradually to ripen for death, and at length to grow ripe for it.—To ripen for death, is to persevere in the exercise of faith and of all grace to the end; and to hold out in a course of new obedience, and of all the fruits of faith to the end.

(1.) It is to persevere in the exercise of faith and of all grace to the end.—It is by faith, that we take up our standing on the sure foundation of Christ's finished work. Faith is just a doing our death-bed work betimes, even all our life-long; a casting off our best righteousnesses as well as our worst, our best doings as well as our worst, behind our backs; and flying,—wretched and miserable, and poor and blind and naked,—as we are, to Christ, as having done all for us, and as having all salvation in him for us. All genuine religion is begun in the exercise of this faith, and carried on in it too. We must live and die in it, if we would indeed die in the Lord.

And where this faith is, it will be attended with the exercise of *every other grace*.—It will be attended with love. For faith worketh by love. It will natively influence love; love to Christ, to his person and to every thing that bears a relation to him. It will necessarily influence the believer to love Christ truly and sincerely, vehemently and ardently, steadily and perseveringly. A true friend loveth at all times. It will influence him to love Christ more and more;—and when he has loved him as much as ever he can, to look down on all his love to him, as nothing; as nothing to the love with which he sees Christ loves him, as nothing to the love with which he deserves to be loved by him,—and as nothing to the love with which he desires and hopes yet to love him. “As the Father hath loved me, (says Christ), so have I loved you; continue ye in my love,” John xv. 9. And such love is the best preparative for dying, as being an anticipation and beginning of the exercise and enjoyments of heaven, the land of love.

Again,

Again, where this faith is, it will be accompanied with repentance ; according to the promise, “ They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him,” Zech. xii. 10. When Christ is seen, and as often as he is seen, in the exercise of faith,—as having had all our sins laid on him, as having borne the punishment of them, and as having carried them all away into the land of everlasting forgetfulness ;—when this is seen, I say, it will make sin very bitter,—it will make it a detestation, an abomination, an abhorrence ; it will engage the believer in a resolute, steady and persevering mortification of all sin, without sparing the most darling idol ; it will make him aim at nothing short of its death, in the view of his death ; it will influence him to walk very humbly, cautiously and watchfully all the days of his pilgrimage. See Ezek. xvi. ult. Isa. xxx. 22. Mic. vi. 8.

Further, where this faith is, it will be attended with patience ; patience and submission under all crosses, and a patient waiting for the accomplishment of the promise. For faith endures, as seeing him that is invisible ; and he that believeth, shall not make haste. Faith, in the glass of the cross of Christ, sees all crosses, even death and the grave, unstinged, disarmed of every thing whereby they might hurt us,—because disburdened of the curse ; and therefore sees cause to triumph over them. The Christian does not boast beyond reason, when he says, “ O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, “ where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and “ the strength of sin is the law : but thanks be to God, “ who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ,” 1 Cor. xv. 55.—57. “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,” Gal. iii. 13. Though he has not yet obtained complete victory over them,—faith, through the prospect of the promise, sees it is sure. “ I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death : O death, I will be thy plagues ; O grave, I will be thy destruction : repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.” Hos. xiii. 14. Nay, faith sees all

all the promises, the promises of all blessedness as well as of an happy outgate from all tribulations, to be firm and sure,—as being all *Yea and Amen in Christ, to the glory of God by us*; and is therefore encouraged to wait, under all present wants and distresses, till God's good time for the accomplishment of them—come. “For “the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the “end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait “for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Hab. ii. 3. It sees no reason for wearying of the Lord's way, or of well-doing; as assuredly knowing that the time of enjoyment is undoubtedly and continually drawing near. “And let us not be weary in well-doing: “for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,” Gal. vi. 9.

Moreover, where this faith is, it is inlaid with that joy which is the beginning and foretaste of heaven. “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though “now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy “unspeakable and full of glory,” 1 Pet. i. 8. Though the believer has experience of sorrows, great sorrows, perhaps greater sorrows than the world are acquainted withal; he would not give the joys he has also experience of, for all the world. See Psal. iv. 6. Prov. xiv. 10.

Now, wherever this faith is, it shall be made to persevere. It is in consequence of the Spirit's apprehending us, that we apprehend Christ, Phil. iii. 12. And he never loses the hold of any whom he has once apprehended; and his holding us is, as it were, his holding the arms of our faith about Christ. We have a pregnant promise of this, Isa. lix. 21. “As for me, this is “my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that “is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy “mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of “the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy “seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for “ever.” And we have thus the highest encouragement to give all diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.

(2.) ^tis to hold out in a course of newobedience, and of all the fruits of faith to the end. To ripen for dying

in the Lord, is to persevere in the exercise of grace, as just now explained,—and in the practice of all holiness, as it becometh saints. It is to live and die in the faith, as it is said of the ancient worthies, Heb. xi. 13.; and it is to be found in the conscientious and diligent discharge of duty, at the Lord's coming, according to Solomon's direction; Eccles. ix. 10. “ Whatsoever thy hand find-“ eth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no “ work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the “ grave whither thou goest.” If we would be found in the Lord at death, we must never once give way to sloth, but hold on in the narrow way which leadeth to everlasting life—with all diligence. There is a heavy woe hanging over the head of the servant who dares behave ill, upon a presumption of his Lord's delaying his coming,—as you read in Mat. xxiv. 48,—51. No servant would wish to be found by his master idling.

There are particularly the few following duties, that our Lord wills we should be employed in at his coming. [1.] Liveliness in faith, and indeed in all grace and duty, as just now hinted; and as the Apostle exhorts, Heb. vi. 11, 12. “ We desire that every one of you do shew “ the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto “ the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of “ them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the “ promises.” See 2 Pet. i. 5,—11. [2.] Watchfulness, —as our Lord exhorts, Luke xii. 35, 36. “ Let your “ loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and “ ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.” [3.] Heavenliness,—being mortified to the world, and alive to God. Where should the hearts of dying Christians be,—but where their Lord is, their inheritance is, their home is: “ If ye then be risen with Christ, seek “ those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on “ the right hand of God; set your affection on things “ above, not on things on the earth.” To see one bowing down to the grave, but grasping as eagerly as ever at the perishing riches of this world,—is one of the most rueful spectacles that this sinful world exhibits; but to see one gradually loosing all earthly gripes, but

at the same time taking a death's gripe of the promise of the purchased inheritance,—is one of the most pleasing, edifying and heavenly sights that is to be seen. [4.] Longing to be rid of a body of sin, and to be with the Lord. “ For we that are in this tabernacle do “ groan, being burdened : not for that we would be “ unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” 2 Cor. v. 4.

Such is the attainment that all ought to aim at, as ever they would be found to die in the Lord. And in so far as they come short of it, they ought to be deeply humbled before the Lord, to cry for a merciful recovery,—and to give themselves no rest till they obtain it.

3. It is to die in a state of ripeness for death. Having gradually ripened for it, it is to fall off like ripe fruit,—according to the promise, Job v. 26. “ Thou “ shalt come to thy grave in a full age ; like as a shock “ of corn cometh in, in his season.”—Doleful enough has sometimes been the death-bed exercise of even genuine saints,—who had given way to unbelief, sloth and untenderness. Their sins stared them in the face ; their evidences for a comfortable meeting with the Lord were lost ; for any thing they could see, they would have to make a leap in the dark ; nay they had dismal apprehensions of meeting with an angry God, and of having their portion with sinners.—But blessed, thrice blessed they, who have gradually ripened for a happy immortality. They see that their salvation is now nearer than when they first believed. They can look back on the world, as a deceitful vanity ; and their hearts, through a foretaste of the fruits of the better country, are loosed from it. They can look forward to the world to come, with comfort and joy ; and they know so much of it, as makes them long for it,—having a desire to depart and to be with Christ. They look on their sins and short-comings with grief and sorrow, it is true ; but they do it also with comfort, as seeing them all done away by the blood of the Lamb. They reflect on the Lord's way toward them with satisfaction and gratitude. We have a remarkable instance of this in Jacob. His lot had perhaps

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been as afflicted as that of most others. Yet, when he came to die, seeing that God had intended good and done good to him, by the most afflicted parts of it; he blessed God, under the character of the *God who had fed him all his life-long unto that day,—and the angel who had redeemed him from all evil*, Gen. xlvi. 15, 16. And, in a word, they take the staff of the promise in the hand of faith; and therewith wade through the Jordan of death in some degree of assurance and comfort,—as David hoped to do, Psal. xxiii. 4. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: For thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

Room indeed must be left to sovereignty. The Lord may surprize even backsliding Christians with a visit,—mercifully recovering them from their departures from him, and making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,—so as they may die in peace and comfort. And he may see cause to hide his face even from the most upright and tender,—so as their sun may set under a cloud, Isa. xlvi. 15. But comfort will readily attend diligence; and the want of it, sloth. “Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness; those that remember thee in thy ways.” Isa. lxiv. 5.—However, we must add here, that the sorrow which may attend the death-bed of the genuine Christian—will soon be over. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning,” Psal. lxxv. 5.

2dly, We shall consider the blessedness of such as die in the Lord. It is beyond description, nay beyond conception. It is so great as to be comprehensible only by God himself, Isa. lxiv. 4. “For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.” However, so much of it may be known from the Bible, as is enough to attract all hearts to it. We are sure that those who die in the Lord shall be blessed with deliverance from all their trials, in the perfection of

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all their graces, in the perfection of all their enjoyments, in the fulfilment of all their hopes, in the accomplishment of all the promises, in the vision and fruition of God and the Lamb, and in the satisfaction of all their desires.

1. They shall be blessed in deliverance from all their trials. They will carry sin and sorrow with them to the very brink of the Jordan of death; but they will carry neither the one nor the other through it with them. The wicked shall carry none of their enjoyments with them; and the righteous shall carry none of their trials with them. At the same time that they bid long farewell to their dearest friends and acquaintance, they will bid an eternal farewell to all troubles—arising from indwelling corruption, from a deceitful world, from a tempting devil, from untender and unfaithful friends, from anxious and perplexing cares, and from crazy body.

(1.) They shall no longer be plagued with indwelling corruption. This had been their trial all their day, and the heaviest of all their trials too. Paul was a notable instance of manifold and heavy trials: “ In prisons frequent, in death oft : Of the Jews five times received he forty stripes, save one : Thrice was he beaten with rods ; once was he stoned ; thrice he suffered shipwreck ; a night and a day, he had been in the deep ; in journeyings often ; in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness, watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, ten, in cold and nakedness,” as he himself tells us 2 Cor. xi. 23,—27. But in all these he was happy. Only, under indwelling corruption he was wretched. “ O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ” Rom. vii. 24. And this wretched foe pursues the best of saints to the gates of death. Nay, it may be, they are in the agonies of a twofold death at once ; the death of the na-

ral body, and the death of a body of sin.—But the moment they leave the frail and dead carcase, which can now be of no use to them, till it be new formed for the purpose of everlasting use,—they will be conquerors, nay, and more than conquerors over their worst foe. Immediately on parting with the loathsome carcase, till it be fashioned again like unto Christ's glorious body,—they'll find themselves well, everlasting well,—in good health, in everlasting health: No longer liable to be disquieted by unbelieving fears and despondencies; no more obnoxious to vain, earthly or unworthy thoughts; no longer in danger of having their lusts and corruptions awakened by tempting objects,—not only as being for ever infinitely removed from all such objects, but as having no more any lusts or corruptions in them. They'll find themselves at once fit to associate with *the spirits of just men made perfect.*

(2.) They will no longer be troubled with a deceitful world. Often had it promised them some satisfaction; and as often had it deceived them,—till they began to feel the deceit. “I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, (says Solomon); and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” Eccles. i. 14. Sometimes they were in danger from its smiles; and sometimes, from its frowns: Always were they in hazard from the one or the other;—in hazard of sinning,—of being lulled asleep in security, or of fretting against God; of being immersed in earthliness, pride, vanity, and forgetfulness of God,—or of being swallowed up in anxious and carking cares, desponding and unbelieving fears. This world had thus been a hard stepmother to them.—But now they bid a gladsome adieu to it, with all its glittering toys or distracting mischiefs. And they have the full comfort of the accomplishment of Christ's cheering promise. John xvi. 33. “In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer I have overcome the world.” Nay, they have now no longer the burden even of those whom it had been greatly their duty to take the charge of; as seeing, perfectly seeing, their God and Father to have the charge

charge of them. Even the nearest relations have no longer the charge or burden of one another. Hence God says, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will pre-serve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me," Jer. xl ix. 11.

(3.) They will no longer be annoyed by a tempting devil. From the moment especially that they had given heart and hand to the Lord Christ,—he had never once failed to go the whole length of his chain, to tempt, molest and harass them. It was not from a want of malice in him, if they had at any time a moment's rest. Hence the Apostle warns us, "Be sober, be vigilant ; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v. 8. And sometimes he had rendered their life scarcely supportable,—an instance whereof we have in Paul : Such was the unsupportable torment of *the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan permitted to buffet him*,—that for this thing he besought the Lord thrice and most ardently, that it might depart from him, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. Sometimes he had put on the guise of a friend ; and tempted them to what was pleasing to the flesh, or even had an appearance of good. Thus through Peter he tempted Christ. Our Lord having plainly foretold his death and resurrection,— "Then Peter took him (it is said) and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord : this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, (he knew and allowed it was Satan speaking out of Peter), thou art an offence unto me : for thou favour-est not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," Mat. xvi. 21,—23. And sometimes he had put off the mask, appeared (I may say) in his own likeness, and tormented them with horrible suggestions,—which, I suppose, the Apostle means by *fiery darts* in Eph. vi. 16. And very readily, on knowing that they must soon be beyond his reach, he had mustered all his force against them on a death-bed,—even as he made the most resolute attack on the Head, in the hour and power of darkness.— But now there is an impassable gulf fixed,

fixed, eternally fixed, between him and them,—that it can never be in his power to annoy them more. While we sojourn in this apostate world, we are continually within speech of the prince of the power of the air. But heaven is infinitely beyond the reach of his cry. See Isa. xxxv. 9, 10.

(4.) They will no longer be made uneasy by untruster and unfaithful friends. David had severe trials from those who owed him the greatest kindness,—as he complains, Psal. iv. 12,—14. And all are warned to lay their account with heavy crosses even in their nearest relations, Mic. vii. 5, 6. False-hearted professors are often as briars and thorns in the sides of the upright and faithful; which made Paul say, “I would they ‘were even cut off who trouble you,’” Gal. v. 12. Nay, the best, by reason of indwelling corruption, are sometimes a discouragement and snare to one another. Even Peter was a snare to Barnabas, as you read in Gal. ii. 12, 13. This makes the loss of the dearest and best friends to be no loss at all to departed saints. Instead of the fellowship of weak, unstable and sinful men,—death brings them to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

(5.) They will be no longer liable to anxious and perplexing cares. Often had they been disturbed by those, in the hours of their closest retirement and the moments of their nearest communion with God. But now they bid an eternal *adieu* to them all. “They ‘neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as ‘the angels of God in heaven,’” Mat. xxii. 30.— Nay, it is sometimes no small burden to the saints, to leave the church and their dear Christian friends behind; while the interests of Zion are in an unprosperous state, especially while they see a storm of judgments hanging over it. But supposing departed saints to have all knowledge of things respecting the church here below,—which may perhaps be true; and all the truth of concern for her welfare,—which is undoubtedly true: Death will at once ease them of all the burden,—by bringing them to see all things respecting the church

church so entirely in the hands of the church's wife, faithful and tender Head, and all these things going on so steadily and successively towards her welfare and perfection,—as to leave no room for anxiety. Could we see things as they see them, we would never have a troubled heart either about ourselves or the church.

(6.) They will no longer be burdened with a crazy body. Often had this been a sad incumbrance to the embodied saint. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. Seldom was the frail and lumpish tabernacle of clay able to keep up with the spiritual and immortal soul.—But now it lays aside its clog. The soul, while in the body, was, I may say, immured in a dungeon. But now the earthly house of this tabernacle turns so crazy, that it falls down about the soul's ears; and without finding itself hurt by the fall, the soul perceives itself at once in open day-light,—and sees even as it is seen, and knows even as it is known.—And though the soul still retains all affection to its fallen carcase,—it feels no uneasiness for it,—no even though it should be burnt, and the ashes thereof scattered towards the four winds of heaven; as seeing every particle thereof under the charge of divine Providence, nay, under the charge of covenant-love. See Psal. xvi. 9, 10.

Thus to those that die in the Lord, death is no loss. Nay, it is great gain.

2. They shall be blessed in the perfection of all their graces.—The wicked shall carry nothing through death with them, but their sins,—their lusts and corruptions—now grown up to full strength,—with the curse of God lying on them, as the just desert of their sins. Though they have ever so great abundance of the pleasures, profits and honours of this world,—they can carry nothing of them hence; they must bid an eternal, though rueful, *adieu* to them all. Nay, though they excel even so eminently in knowledge,—all the knowledge that the world counts excellent, useful and delightful,—so as even to surpass a *Bacon*, a *Newton*, a *Locke*, and the most learned men that ever were; they must at once plunge

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into utter darkness, without ever having it in their power to recal a pleasant thought,—or indeed to reflect on any thing but their sins; the dreadful folly of studying every thing but the one thing needful, and thereby coming short of it. The saints, on the other hand, will carry all their graces with them. It will be no loss to them, that they do not carry those things with them which one way or another were a continual snare, burden or hazard to them; while they carry every thing that is of worth about themselves with them. Death that will swallow up all their corruptions, will at once perfect all their graces. They'll in the twinkling of an eye find themselves arrived at the stature of perfect men in Christ. On closing their eyes on this valley of tears, and opening them in glory,—the very first sight they get of God and the Lamb, will perfectly assimilate them to the object seen. “We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is,” 1 John iii. 2. The elect babe that never saw the light, will find himself at no loss for sight,---but will in the first instance be ravished with the light of eternal glory. Though the old sinner die an idiot; the young vessel of mercy dies in full maturity. “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accur-sed.” Isa. lxv. 20.

There will be no room indeed, in the immediate vision and full fruition of God and the Lamb, for the exercise of grace as now, under a dispensation of ordinances and only a partial accomplishment of the promise. *For what a man feeth, why doth he yet hope for?* Faith will be swallowed up in vision, and hope in fruition. But the new man will not be mangled; none of his members will be cut off. Faith acts now, by trust in an unseen Saviour; it will act then, by seeing what it now believes. Hope acts now, by patiently waiting for the promised good; it will act then, by eternally drinking it in. Love will no longer pant after an absent Christ; but will eternally solace itself in him—ma-

nifesting himself in all his glory. And joy will no longer be mixed with sorrow ; but shall be uninterruptedly and eternally carried up to the very highest pitch of ravishment.

3. They shall be blessed in the perfection of all their present enjoyments.—If the enjoyments which this world affords were worth the mentioning,—they shall be blessed with what are abundantly more desireable. In place of the pinching poverty or deceitful riches which this world allots to people,—they shall be blessed with riches and honour, yea, durable riches and righteousness. “ The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,” Rev. vii. 17. And it is worthy of observation, that in the vision which John had of the heavenly Jerusalem,—*the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass*: So that what the world are now most of all enamoured with, they shall trample under their feet ; being blessed with infinitely better enjoyments, they shall make no account of what the world are now most eagerly in pursuit of.

But when we say, that they shall be blessed in the perfection of their present enjoyments,—we mean those of a spiritual nature ; such as are adapted to the nature, faculties and cravings of the precious and immortal soul. Christians have enjoyments which this world doth not afford, and which the men of the world know nothing of ; they have sweet satisfaction, great blessedness, the very beginnings of heaven,—in communion with God and with one another, in word and ordinances : And the heavenly state will be a perfection of all those. Those who are got home to the heavenly Jerusalem, will not need to regret the loss of their dear christian friends of the precious ordinances, nay nor of the precious Bible. To lose the cistern for the fountain-head, is no loss at all. At the same time that death will put a period to the present method of their enjoyments, it will bring them to a far better ; it will bring them to the immediate and full enjoyment of all that happiness,

happiness, of which they have in the mean time only some distant and scanty prospect of in word and ordinances. Instead of being under the necessity of studying the mind of God from his written word, they'll see it at once in the face of him whose name is, *The Word of God.* In place of some scanty drops, through the medium of word and ordinances,—they'll drink uninterruptedly and eternally at the fountain-head. “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house : And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life ; in thy light shall we see light.” Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9.

4. They shall be blessed in the fulfilment of all their hopes. What happiness is enjoyed in this world, arises mostly from hope. It is not so much what a man possesses, as what he hopes yet to obtain, that gives him satisfaction. The worldling’s hopes are all from this world ; and they’ll all deceive him : So that at death he will have dreadful reason to say, “ All is lost.” The Christian’s hopes are all from the world to-come ; and let them be ever so high, assured and comfortable,—the heavenly state will fulfil, nay outdo them all. Isa. lxiv. 4. When the sinner dies,—he goes to prison, to ly there, till he be brought to account for all his presumptuous hopes of impunity in sin ; and all his confident hopes of well-being on the footing of his well-doing. When the saint dies,—he goes home, to enjoy all that ever he had been made to hope for, in the times of his most comfortable assurance, and in the moments of his sweetest communion with God. Yes, Christian, now is the time of hope ; hereafter is the time of enjoyment : And the ground of your hope will not fail you. “ For the needy shall not always be forgotten ; the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever,” Psal. ix. 18. “ Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation,” Isa. xxviii. 16. You may form some faint conception by this, what heaven must be ; just

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the uninterrupted and full enjoyment of what you have in the mean time some taste of,—and been made to hope for, when your hopes, under the cheering influence of a bright glimpse of the Sun of righteousness, have been most assured, comfortable and joyful.

5. They shall be blessed in the accomplishment of all the promises. It is impossible to tell, nay, or conceive how much goodness is laid up in the exceeding great and precious promises of God's everlasting covenant. See Psal. xxxi. 19. But great and precious as it is, the full and everlasting enjoyment of it is insured to all saints. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you: Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”

1 Pet. i. 3,—5. The promise is in the accomplishing; the far greatest part of it yet remains to be fulfilled: But as sure as God has spoken it, and as sure as he hath begun to accomplish it,—he will go on to perform it fully, to the everlasting comfort and satisfaction of all that trust it. “Thy word (says David,) is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever,” Psal. cxix. 160.—Look through the precious Bible then, Christian; study the contents of it well; and as an encouragement to you, under all present losses and crosses, and in the view of death—which will put a final period to all earthly connections,—assure yourselves of the full accomplishment of all the promises thereof. As God said to Abraham, “Lift up now thine eyes and look, from the place where thou art, north-ward, and south-ward, and east-ward, and west-ward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever,” Gen. xiii. 14, 15:—So may we say to you, Look from the beginning to the end of your Bibles, without overlooking the smallest iota or title,

title, and assure yourselves all is yours : " All things are yours," says the Apostle, 1 Cor. iii. 21. Presently yours, surely yours,—and shall be eternally yours.

6. They shall be blessed in the immediate vision and full fruition of God and the Lamb. This will be the summit and centre of all their bliss; even as it is the ultimate intention of all that we have spoken of. They'll be compleatly delivered from all annoyances from within or from without,—that they may see God ; even as when the disciples, on the mount of transfiguration, *had lift up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only,* Mat. xvii. 8. Their graces shall be perfected,—that they may serve God and see his face. Herein all their present enjoyments, all their hopes, and the full accomplishment of all the promises—will be summed up.—We know indeed but very little of it. However, we may well know, that it must be all blessedness and perfection. God himself is and must be the chief good, the rest of the heart, the centre of all the desires of the immortal soul. To see and enjoy him therefore, must be the perfection of happiness.

And all saints shall uninterruptedly and eternally see him. They shall see his face ; they shall see him face to face ; they shall see him as he is. They shall see him, as in Christ. They shall not only see the man Christ Jesus,; which will indeed be a most glorious and blessed sight : But they shall see God in him. " God, " who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, " hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the " knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus " Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6. And that light which is now but dark and dim, shall be brigittened into perfection ; enabling all saints uninterruptedly and eternally to behold all the glory of God shining in him,—all the glory of all his perfections,—all the glory of all his perfections as centering in him who is Immanuel, their Redeemer, Husband and Head ; all the glory of divine love, divine wisdom, divine justice and holiness, divine power and omnipotence, divine goodness and mercy, shining in

in their everlasting redemption. Thus they'll see God to be for ever infinitely well-pleased with them; they'll see him to be uninterruptedly and eternally rejoicing over them to do them good, all possible good; they'll see his very heart to be all love towards them. They'll be led into the whole mystery of grace and the whole mystery of providence, respecting the church and themselves, as the same lie in the divine mind. They will not need to study those mysteries as in the present state,—by a careful searching of the scriptures and a diligent observation of providences. They'll see them at once in all their glory, in all their plainness, and in the connection of all their various parts, as the same lie in the divine purpose and decree; the glorious Immanuel continually holding up the book of the divine decrees to them, for their looking into it, as it were, with their own eyes,—he having prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. Thus they'll see clearly into the whole plan of redemption, particularly as centering in the glory of God and their salvation. And they'll see that God's thoughts and ways were all along thoughts and ways of peace and not of evil,—to give them an expected end.

And they'll thus be uninterruptedly and eternally blessed with as large communications of the divine goodness, as they shall be able to contain. Seeing God perfectly, they shall enjoy him perfectly too. They shall be as innumerable small vessels in the ocean; ever full, though never able to comprehend all. What a wonderful difference is ~~that~~ between earth and heaven! Here the most favoured saints have only a taste, a sip or a drop at seldom and rare times. But in God's presence is fulness of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Thus

7. In one word, they shall be blessed in the satisfaction of all their desires. The enjoyment God the chief good is that beyond which the heart of man, hungry and immense as it is, neither needs nor can desire or enjoy more. All the desires of renewed souls are collected and centred in this one individual point, the enjoyment

joyment of God here and hereafter. "One thing
"have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after,
"that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days
"of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to
"inquire in his temple." Psal. xxvii. 4. And now
they reach the point they so ardently desire. "And
"it shall be said in that day" (to far better purpose and
in a far higher sense than ever it had been said be-
fore) "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him,
"and he will save us: This is the Lord; we have
"waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his sal-
"vation." Isa. xxv. 9. God's love and goodness will
uninterruptedly and eternally flow into their inmost
souls. "He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in
"their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." Isa. lvii. 2. And they shall be uninterrupted and eter-
nally swallowed up in love and gratitude, joy and praise.
"Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins
"in his own blood, And hath made us kings and
"priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory
"and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. i.
5, 6.—It is not for us to have distinct apprehensions
of all this blessedness. But all saints have some expe-
rience of glimpses of the beloved's face, and of ineffable
satisfaction resulting therefrom. Now, suppose those
to be as full as they would wish, and suppose them ne-
ver to be interrupted or ended; this is just heaven, or
something very like it.—

We shall now conclude this discourse in some im-
provement of this most comfortable truth, "Blessed are
"the dead who die in the Lord." Hence see,

1. What a dreadful thing it must be, to die out of
Christ. If it may be said, "Blessed are the dead who
"die in the Lord;" it may with equal but dreadful
reason be said, "Cursed are the dead who die not in
"the Lord,—or who die out of Christ and in their
"sins." The reverse of what has been just now de-
scribed, must be their wretched and miserable condition
for ever.—Christians, or those who die in the Lord,
shall be blessed in deliverance from all their trials. But
death

death to all Christless sinners, instead of being a relief from present tribulations or even the agonies of death will only be the beginnings of their sorrows. Suppose them to have been afflicted all their life-long, and to die in the severest agonies of both body and mind; who were to follow them but one step into the other world would see them,—plunged at once into torments on a comparison with which all the miseries they had hitherto endured were perfect ease.

“ Snares, fire and brimstone, furious storms

“ on sinners he shall rain :

“ This, as the portion of their cup,

“ doth unto them pertain.” Psal. xi. 6.

The rich man (in the parable) died and was buried, and (it availed him nothing that he had a honourable burial, or that his friends praised him for having acted such an industrious part in life, Psal. xlix. 18, 19.—for in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, Luke xvi. 22, 23.

Again, Christians shall be blessed in the perfection of all their graces. But at the same time that Christless sinners shall leave all that is lovely and commendable about their temper and disposition, carriage and behaviour, behind them; and the worst have something amiable and praise-worthy about them: They'll carry all their sins, all their lusts and corruptions—now grown up to full strength or rather perfect devilishness, with them. A departed saint is one whose soul is thoroughly cured of the disease of sin. A departed sinner is one whose case is grown everlasting incurable. A departed saint is, I may say, a glorified angel. A departed sinner is in like manner an imprisoned devil. And his lusts and corruptions, particularly his ill conscience, will be an eternal torture to him. “ Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.” Isa. lxvi. 24.—The dead bodies of the saints shall rest in their graves, under the guardianship of the covenant of promise, in order to a resurrection in eternal glory, in partnership with their blessed souls. The dead bodies of sinners

shall

shall be held fast in their graves, as in so many dark prisons; in order to a resurrection in shame and everlasting contempt, in partnership with their accursed souls.

Further, Christians shall be blessed in the perfection of all their enjoyments. But all the enjoyments of Christless sinners are eternally at an end, the moment they leave this deceitful and miserable world. Only, the remembrance of having misimproved and abused them will sting them with the keenest remorse for ever. It is a dreadfully cutting word which Abraham (in the parable) says to the rich man in hell; "Son, remember 'that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things.'" Luke xvi. 25. As if he had said, you have got all the good things you shall ever get; and you must now pine in eternal want: Because, instead of improving the riches that providence lavished on you for God's glory and your soul's welfare, you had not so much as house-room or a morsal to spare to good Lazarus.

Whereas Christians shall be blessed in the fulfilment of all their hopes; all hope, all ground of hope, all shadow of ground of hope, of deliverance, nay, or of the least abatement of their misery,—shall at once utterly fail all Christless sinners. Perhaps, they had bouyed themselves up with the hopes even of everlasting blessedness; but now their despair is deep and tormenting, proportionably to the height of those presumptuous hopes. See Mat. xi. 20,—24.—And whereas Christians shall be blessed in the accomplishment of all the promises of God's word; Christless sinners shall be miserable under the execution of all the threatenings of it. Notwithstanding their presumptuous hopes while in the world,—they had also fears, far greater fears than people were ready to apprehend, or than they were willing to acknowledge; and in death all their fears came upon them, nay, and infinitely more than all they ever feared,—the execution of all the threatenings of God's law. Nay, whereas Christians shall have the joyful assurance of a blessed resurrection of their dear bodies, of a glorious acquittance

in the great day before all worlds, and of a large addition thereupon to their blessedness ;—Christless sinners shall have the horrible prospect of the resurrection of their cursed bodies, of being haled before the dread tribunal of Christ, of being for ever banished from his blissful presence, and of an inconceivable addition thereupon to the already insupportable weight of their woe.

Moreover, whereas all saints shall be blessed in the immediate vision and full fruition of God and the Lamb,—a seeing of the heart of God to be for ever all love towards them ; all sinners shall be eternally cursed with the continual sight of God,—a seeing of his heart to be all wrath against them.—Thus, in one word, whereas all saints shall be blessed in the satisfaction of all their desires ; all sinners shall be eternally brimful of wrath, horror, anguish and despair. *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

2. What a prudent and wise part they act, who prepare and hold themselves in readiness for dying in the Lord. All things call aloud for this. Mankind are made for eternity. We are guilty of the most atrocious blasphemy, I may say, against ourselves,—a degrading of ourselves below the dignity of human nature, a debasing of ourselves to the rank of brutes ; if we do not consider and carry ourselves as immortal beings. Time itself bears a direct respect to eternity. It is incessantly moving forwards to it ; and the whole value of it lies in affording opportunity of preparing for it. All the comforts of this life bear a respect to eternity. They are brutes or worse, who can be satisfied with them as adequate to the desires of their souls ; they are really of no worth, but as giving leisure and convenience for our journey heaven-wards. All the trials of this life bear a respect to eternity. They loudly proclaim that our rest is not here, and excite us to provide for an eternal hereafter. Especially, all divine ordinances bear a respect to eternity. The primary design of them is, to bring us off the slippery foundation we are naturally upon for an eternal world ; and to build us on

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the sure foundation which God hath laid in Sion. They are the most arrant fools, therefore, who, slighting the language of all things about them, provide only for an uncertain moment. They are the wisest of wise men, who, improving the language of present things, make sure work of everlasting blessedness, when the world and time shall be no more. To provide for time and not for eternity, for the body and not for the soul, is infinite folly. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mat. xvi. 26. Those who are wise for their souls and wise for eternity, are wise indeed. "Lay hold on eternal life."

1 Tim. vi. 12.

3. Good reason for trying what case we are in for dying. Life is quite uncertain; "Boast not thyself of to-morrow: for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," Prov. xxvii. Death is quite certain; "I know, (says Job) that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living," Job xxx. 23. And a matter of such infinite moment and importance as dying in the Lord, or in our sins, must not be left to mere venture or chance. Those that can find in their hearts, without horror and dismay, to make a leap in the dark into the vast ocean of eternity,—have no notion of the importance of death, and will very soon be awakened out of their dream.

(1.) Let us try therefore, if we have had realized impressions of death, of the great and infinite import of death, and of what must be the immediate issue of matters with us in death; let us try, I say, if we had realized impressions hereof made on our spirits and consciences. There is nothing more common than for people to suppose they must at last die,—though indeed the generality are for putting the evil day afar off. But there is nothing more rare, than for people to have proper impressions of the importance and consequences of death abiding on their spirits and consciences. If we have any right thoughts of death,—it has been fixed in our minds and consciences, by the law and spirit of God,—that

that we are liable, on account of sin, to death with the sting or curse of the law in it; and that there is not a possibility of escaping the curse, by all our own endeavours,—or otherwise than through uniting with our Lord Jesus Christ, who bore the curse that we might go free.

(2.) Let us try what foundation we are upon, in the view of our appearance before God at death. There is nothing more certain, than that we are all by nature on a wrong foundation,—the foundation of a broken covenant of works, or which is the same thing, our own good doings and good duties. And we are still on that sandy foundation,—unless we have found it undermined, as it were, and sinking under us; through the Spirit's convincing us of the naughtiness of all our own righteousnesses, good doings and good duties. Nay, so vehement and resolute is our natural attachment to the way of doing for life, that we will still labour in that way,—till we be brought, in the day of the Mediator's power, weary and heavy-laden, even with the sentence of death in ourselves, to Christ as our alone, but sure rest. Conscience must always have something whereon to rest; and therefore, till Christ be revealed therein, will cling to self-righteousness, even as for life.

(3.) Let us try what we know about begun meetnes for dying in the Lord. It is presumption to expect to be made meet for death, by a few faint wishes on a death-bed; and therefore in the mean time to delay preparation for it. God may in sovereign mercy call even the most heedless sinners at the eleventh hour. But none have reason to expect it; and least of all those who, upon a presumption of it, delay doing their death-bed work betimes.—Verily, preparation is usually a gradual work. Try therefore what you know about being brought to Christ, as the alone but safe rest of your consciences; and to God in him, as the alone but satisfying rest of your hearts. See Mat. xi. 28. Psal. cxvi. 7. Try what you know about being gradually mortified to the world and sin,—through the virtue of Christ's cross. See Rom. vi. 6. Gal. v. 24. vi. 14.

And

And try what you know about having your hearts gradually drawn towards God and the things of God,—through the virtue of Christ's resurrection. See Col. iii.

1.—4. Isa. xxvi. 8, 9.

4. Good reason why those who are in a state of begun preparation for death should rejoice. If the good work is really begun, it will most assuredly be carried forward to perfection; and in the faith of it, you may use all diligence with all cheerfulness. See Psal. cxxxviii.

8. Phil. i. 6. And whatever fights of affliction you may have abiding you, in your wilderness-state,—the crown of glory will abundantly counterbalance all; and you ought in the mean time to support and encourage yourselves in the faith of it. See 2 Cor. iv. 16,—18.

5. Good reason why those who are in a backgoing state should repent and do their first works. Backsliding is a terrible sin and judgment. "The backslider in

"heart shall be filled with his own ways," Prov. xiv.

14. Backsliding, however gratifying to the flesh, is attended with no true pleasure or satisfaction. We may appeal to the consciences and feelings of all sorts of backsliders, for the truth of this. But however sweet it may be in the mean time, it will make a comfortless, sorrowful and doleful death-bed. How terrible will it be in that awful hour, if the Spirit of God speak into the conscience, what the Apostle says, Rom. vi. 21. "What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is "death." You thought you had fruit; but now you feel it is all a most perilous deceit.

6. Good reason why all should be diligent; diligent in preparation for dying in the Lord. This is not a matter to be trifled about. The blessedness to be lost by negligence or attained to by diligence, is infinite—is everlasting. Eternally miserable must they be, who mind only earthly things and neglect spiritual things. Eternally blessed are they, who give all diligence to run so as they may obtain.—Let the most diligent be more and more diligent. You will presently and eternally reap the fruit of it. See 1 Cor. xv. 58. Gal. vi.

9.—Let the slothful shake off sloth, and bestir themselves in a matter so infinitely interesting. Who would not tremble at the thought of being found slumbering and sleeping, when the midnight alarm is sounded,—“ Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him?”—Let thoughtless and heedless sinners behold themselves betimes. You must die. You must die soon. Your security marks you, as persons on the straight road to eternal death. There is only one way of escape. Christ is the way. You are beseeched to come into this way,—by gripping to him as your last refuge. You have no time to lose. God is peremptory with you. “ The Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” Heb. iii. 7, 8. And remember, your everlasting happiness or misery must be determined by the entertainment you give to God’s gracious invitation. “ For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Gal. vi. 7.

THE CONTRAST, &c.

REV. xiv. 13.

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

SERMON II.

ANTICHRISTIANISM, or Popery, is the greatest curse; and the Reformation, or Protestantism, the greatest blessing. *Paul*, under the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy, sets forth Antichrist as the most deadly and ruinous evil that ever plagued the Church or the world. He calls him—“ That man of sin,—the “son of perdition : who opposeth and exalteth himself “above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; “so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shew-“ing himself that he is God.—Even him whose coming “is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs “and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of un-“righteousness in them that perish ; because (says he) [a dreadful warning to this gospel-despising and indifferent generation] “ they received not the love of the truth “that they might be saved. And for this cause (adds he) “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should “believe a lie : that they all might be damned, who be-“lieved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteous-“ness.” 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12. It is enough to chill one’s blood, so much as to hear of the hideous form under which he is represented in vision to *John*. “And I saw, (says he) a woman sit upon a scarlet-“coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having “seven heads and ten horns :—Having a golden cup in “her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name
“written ;

" written ; MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE
 " MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS ON
 " THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with
 " the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the
 " martyrs of Jesus." Rev. xvii. 3, 4, 5, 6. The Romish
 clergy are not one whit better than their monstrous
 head. It is a most frightful representation which John
 got of them in Rev. ix. 1,—11. " And the fifth angel
 " sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the
 " earth : and to him was given the key of the bottom-
 " less pit. And he opened the bottomless pit ; and
 " there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of
 " great furnace ; and the sun and the air were darken-
 " ed, by reason of the smoke of the pit : and there
 " came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth ; and
 " unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the
 " earth have power : and it was commanded them that
 " they should—hurt—only those who have not the seal
 " of God in their foreheads : And to them it was given
 " that they should not kill them, but that they should
 " be tormented five months : and their torment was as
 " the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.
 " And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not
 " find it ; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee
 " from them : And the shapes of the locusts were like
 " unto horses prepared unto battle ; and on their heads
 " were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces
 " were as the faces of men : And they had hair as the
 " hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of
 " lions : And they had breast-plates, as it were breast-
 " plates of iron ; and the sound of their wings was as
 " the sound of chariots of many horses running to bat-
 " tle : And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there
 " were stings in their tails : and their power was to hurt
 " men five months : And they had a king over them,
 " who is the angel of the bottomless pit ; whose name
 " in the Hebrew tongue is ABADDON, but in the Greek
 " tongue hath his name APOLLYON." — But frightful
 as this representation is, the woful experience of the

Church

Church and of the world has now for hundreds of years proved it to be no exaggeration of the truth.

It is with great pleasure, that we may now compare this horrible scene with the description which the same oracles of God give of the Reformation; particularly in the first verses of this chapter. "And I looked, and lo, "a Lamb stood on the mount Zion; and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads: And I heard "a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, "and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the "voice of harpers, harping with their harps: And they "sung as it were a new song before the throne, and "before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man "could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and "four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for "they are virgins: These are they who follow the "Lamb, whithersoever he goeth: These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God, "and to the Lamb: And in their mouth was found no "guile; for they are without fault before the throne "of God.—And I saw another angel fly in the midst of "heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto "them that dwell on the earth; and to every nation, "and kindred, and tongue, and people: Saying, with "a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for "the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him "that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the "fountains of waters."—It is good to live in such days, and good dying in them too; it is singularly so, on a comparison with the times of Antichrist's reign,—as in the text now again read.

Having formerly explained the comfortable truth which is here declared,—*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord;* we shall now consider the season to which it specially refers, expressed in the words—*from henceforth:* That is, from the time to which this prophecy refers; which, as hinted in the entry, is doubtless from the beginning of the Reformation from Popery, and for-

wards to the end of time. It was always a truth, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ;” but it is now eminently so. It was *always* a blessed thing to die in the Lord ; but it is *now* singularly so. And,

1st, To prevent mistake, we must observe, That it was always a blessed thing to die in the Lord. It was so, in Old-Testament times ; it was so in the first ages of Christianity ; nay it was so, even in the darkest times of Antichristianism.

1. It was a blessed thing to die in the Lord, in Old-Testament times. All saints, from the very beginning, died in the faith of an happy immortality ; and died in comfort too, proportionably to the measure of their faith.—The very first gospel promise was a promise of eternal life. Eternal life, we know, was promised in the covenant of works. And the first gospel promise, Gen. iii. 15. was a promise of a compleat recovery from all the ruins of the fall. And therefore the antedeluvian believers must all have died in the faith of a blessed immortality, proportionably to the understanding which they had of the meaning and import of the promise on which their faith leaned.—*By faith Abel, (the first that fell a sacrifice to death,) offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain*, Heb. xi. 4. And his faith, in proportion to his understanding of the ground of it, must have carried in it a belief, that the promised seed should in due time offer himself a sacrifice, hereby to bring him to God. *By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death*, Heb. xi. 5. ; that is, what we call death for he no doubt underwent such a change as those who are found alive at the second coming of Christ—shall undergo : And therefore must surely have departed this life, in the full and comfortable assurance of immediate and everlasting blessedness. Besides, we are assured, he prophesied of the second coming of Christ ; to deliver his people from all their tribulations, and to avenge them of all their foes. See Jude 14, 15.

It is expressly recorded of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, that they died in the faith of a far better inheritance than the earthly Canaan,—as we read in Heb.

xi. 13,—16. Nay, *Job*, who it is likely lived in a very dark age and place of the world, professed, even under the forest frowns of providence, his faith of a blessed resurrection to eternal life, Job xix. 25,—27. No doubt hereof can be made about David. By the spirit of prophecy, he foresaw his own resurrection to everlasting joy,—through foreseeing the blessed ground of it, the resurrection of the promised Messiah. “ My flesh (says “ he) shall rest in hope : For thou wilt not leave my “ soul in hell ; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One “ to see corruption : Thou wilt shew me the path of “ life : In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right “ hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psal. xvi. 9,—11. Nay, to add no more here, the Apostle bears testimony concerning those who suffered under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and other persecutors in the latter days of the Jewish church ; the Apostle, I say, bears testimony concerning them,—that they cheerfully suffered the cruellest usage and the cruelest deaths, rather than renounce the faith of the true God and his instituted worship : Which it was impossible they could do, without the faith of a blessed immortality,—unless we must suppose them to be fools or madmen. See Heb. xi. 32,—40.

It is thus a most absurd notion, to suppose that the Old-Testament contains no promises of eternal life ; and consequently, that the saints under that dispensation had not the faith of it. In the childhood of the Church, it is true, there was not such a clear revelation of spiritual and everlasting things, as now. But there was nevertheless such a revelation of them, as supported the saints in a steady attachment to the good ways of the Lord—in life and death. And would to God ! that, under the far clearer revelation of life and immortality that we enjoy, many did not bewray a far weaker faith. Those who attempt to reduce the Old-Testament to a system of mere carnality, certainly do so.

2. It was a blessed thing to die in the Lord, in the first ages of Christianity. If it was so, under the Old-Testament dispensation,—it was still more so under the New, even in that early period,—proportionably to
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the increase of light, and of the grace and comfort of the Holy Ghost. With respect to this period, before Christianity became the legal establishment of the empire, and while Christians were almost continually exposed to the rage of their Heathen persecutors, it is said,—“ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Rev. xii. 11. In the assurance of a resurrection to everlasting life, they overcame their very persecutors. This was the very thing which supported them under the cruelest usage and the most frightful deaths, and made them triumph over the same. The Heathens, to deprive the Christians of those ages, of this grand support,—burnt their bodies, and scattered the ashes thereof into the air and rivers ; but all in vain, while those magnanimous sufferers assuredly believed that every grain of their dust was precious in the sight of the Lord,—and rested under the charge of him in whose cause they died, in order to a blessed resurrection.

3. It was a blessed thing to die in the Lord, even in the darkest times of Antichristianism. Even when Anti-christ raged most furiously against the saints, God had still a few hidden ones. At the same time that *the court which was without the temple was left out, and not measured*,—as being given unto the Gentiles, corrupt and superstitious Christians—who had become as Gentiles ; *and the holy city was trodden under foot by these Gentiles forty and two months : the temple of God and the altar and those that worshipped therein were measured*, as we read in Rev. xi. 1, 2. They were measured, because they were to be preserved ; though the Gentiles were to be permitted to tread under foot the outer-court, they were not to be suffered to enter into the inner-court ; as it was set apart as an *asylum or sanctuary for God's little remnant*. Accordingly, even in the times of the hottest rage of Antichristianism, God must have had a remnant however small. His *measuring* is much of the same import with the *sealing*, which we read of in chap. vii. 4. And it is observable, that as there were an hundred

hred forty and four thousand sealed, set apart for preservation before the storm came on ; so they were all alive and safe, not in their own persons, but in their successors,—when the storm was blown over ; precisely the same number were found standing on the mount Zion with the Lamb, in the first verse of the xivth chapter, which undoubtedly refers to the dawn of the Reformation. And these inner-court worshippers have a temple measured off for their use,—though it must continue all the while shut, as may be collected from the last verse of chap. xi. ; intimating that their worship shall be in a great measure in secret, out of the sight of the world, and not in a state of fellowship with the outer-court worshippers. Nay, and they have an altar secured to them too.—being possessed of that part of the temple, the court of the priests where the altar stood ; intimating their knowledge of and trust in the sacrifice of the great High Priest, our Lord Jesus Christ. And this, during the whole reign of Antichrist, was their all-supporting cordial in life and death.

Again, no sooner did the Antichristian dragon succeed to the Pagan dragon,*—having the same power put into his hand on behalf of corrupt Christianity and against pure Christianity, which his predecessor had employed against Christianity itself, name and thing ; no sooner, I say, did this take place,—than God had a place in the wilderness prepared for the true church, whither she might flee, and where she should be fed, all the time of the dragon's power. See Rev. xii. 5, 6.
 "And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron ; and her child was caught up to God and to his throne : And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Thus at the same time that the man-child, (by whom we understand lordly aspiring, and ambitious clergymen, with those that crunched under the burden of their tyrannical

* See the Note at the end, No I.

cal impositions on conscience,—at the same time, that this man-child) was caught up to God and to his throne,—taken under the protection of civil authority in the days of *Constantine*, and had a rod of iron put into his hand—for obliging all to bow down before him; at the same instant, I say, the woman (the true, fruitful and child-bearing church) fled into the wilderness,—where, in the place which God had provided for her, (though truly dreary and barren as a wilderness,)—she was fed, supported and nourished, a thousand two hundred and threescore days or years,—all the time between the begun rise and begun fall of Antichrist.

Thus it has always been a blessed thing to live and to die in the Lord. But,

2dly, It is now singularly so. However, we must observe here,—that Antichrist's rise, height, or fall, makes no alteration in the state of the dead. Heaven was a place of the same blessedness, in the days of his fullest reign, as now in the times of his begun decline. But the alteration implied in the words—*From henceforth*, now under consideration,—lies in the great increase of comfort, satisfaction and joy, which people may now have in the view of dying, and in dying; on a comparison with the times of Popery. We must further observe, that while it is here said, “Blessed are “the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth”—this refers chiefly to the times immediately going before those which this part of the prophecy respects; viz. the dark, dismal and uncomfortable times of Popery's greatest prevalence, especially under the sixth trumpet. And people may have singular comfort, satisfaction and joy in the view of dying, and in dying now, since the breaking up of the light of the Reformation,—on a comparison with people in those doleful times. This will appear, if we consider,

i. The state of the Popish religion; particularly the ignorance, uncomforableness, uncharitableness and cruelty of it. Let us therefore take a brief view,

(i.) Of the ignorance that prevailed under Popery. On the incursions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, and other northern

northern nations into the *Roman empire*,—darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. Those barbarous heathens, on mingling with the people that they had conquered, embraced the Christian religion, that is, the corrupt profession of it which then obtained; but knew little or nothing about genuine Christianity. The wars and desolations which they made in almost every part of the empire for hundreds of years, naturally choked all knowledge and learning. So that it is almost incredible what ignorance prevailed through Europe, especially from the beginning of the 7th century, till a little before the Reformation *. All authors who write of those times are full of complaints of the ignorance, darkness and stupidity of them. It is said, that persons of the highest rank, and in the most eminent stations, could not read or write.

What learning remained, was chiefly monopolized by clergymen, particularly the *Monks*. But alas! it lay in things absolutely foreign to that gospel of peace which is the sure support in death. Their chief study was to start unprofitable questions, and dispute with dogmatical stiffness about things of small consequence. Their divinity ran upon visions, prodigies, deliverance from purgatory by the prayers of the Monks, miraculous power of the sign of the cross, and such like useless baggage. Above all, their aim was to augment the riches, grandeur and authority of the church; particularly of the Pope. And as for the generality of the clergy, who assumed the charge of souls,—they were sunk in the grossest ignorance of divine things. One tells us, *That many of them never saw the scriptures in their lives.* And another reports, that an Archbishop of *Mentz* lighting upon a Bible, and looking into it, expressed himself thus,—*Of a truth, I do not know what book this is; but I perceive every thing in it is against us* †. They had just as much sense left, as

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* See the Note at the end, No II.

† See a full proof of these things, and many more of the same nature, from Popish Historians,—in a very useful book for ordinary readers; *Bennet's memorial of the Reformation*, p. 18,—23.

to know how dangerous to their interest it was to suffer people to become acquainted with their Bibles,—as being the plainest proof of the inconsistency of their principles and practices with the will of God; and therefore prohibited them from the free use of those oracles of God in their own language. Nay, it is said, that many of them did not understand, and could scarce read the prayers they were obliged daily to drudge through.—And such clergymen must have been sorry comforters to poor sinners, under the agonies of conscience on a death-bed.

This sore judgment was foretold, by the sounding of the fourth trumpet, Rev. viii. 12. “ And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.” A dreadful eclipse! A horrible darkness. And yet is was but small, on a comparison with the almost total darkness foretold, by the sounding of the fifth trumpet, chap. ix. 1, 2. “ I saw, says John, a star fall from heaven to the earth. —And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened, by reason of the smoke of the pit.” Let us now take a view,

(2.) Of the uncomfortableness of the Popish religion; the slippery and unsatisfying grounds which it lays down for sinners whereon to rest, in the view of going out of time into eternity. While it locked up the Scriptures from them, it is easy to see,—these must have been such as no man, without terror and agony, could have ventured upon *. Well, What were they? good works, a well-spent life, charitable deeds, and the like. But what signified these to a poor sinner, whose conscience was now thoroughly awakened, on the near prospect of appearing before his Judge,—and which bore

* See the Note at the end, No III.

bore testimony that his good works were at least far fewer than his evil works, and therefore bound him over to the righteous judgment of God? But alas! may some say, these are the very grounds of peace and comfort that multitudes of Protestants at this day lay before persons on their death-bed. If so,—“ Tell it ‘not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon: ‘lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the ‘daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.’” It is because these Protestants have forsaken the good old Protestant doctrines, and gone over to Popery in one of the most dangerous of all its abominations.

Again, what grounds of hope and peace did Popery lay before persons in their dying moments? In so far as their good works were supposed to come short,—they had papal indulgences, dispensations, pardons, prayers and such like broken reeds to sell to them; for a round sum of money, or a rich mortification to *Holy church*. And whosoever the Popish clergy,—who, like locusts, ate up almost all where-ever they came, and made a prey of the deluded creatures living and dying, and dead; whenever, I say, they found they could make a good bargain by it,—they were sure to keep the poor wretch’s conscience thoroughly awake, by representing his good works to be very few and his evil works to be very many and exceeding sinful; they were sure to do so, till they had made their most of him. Hence the civil state, in some countries, was obliged to interpose, and make death-bed wills in favour of the church null and void *.

But what signified all this to conscience? Of what avail could the pardon of a manifestly wretchedly venal priest be to a convinced sinner, going soon to appear before the Sovereign and righteous Judge of all the earth? It might soothe his conscience, it could not heal it. It might stifle the voice of his conscience, it could not give comfort: Well might the dying wretch have said to all his priests, as Job said to his friends;

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“ Miserable

* *M'Kenzie's Institutions*, book III. tit. 8. sect. 42.

" Miserable comforters are ye all." Job xvi. 2.— Last of all, they had the holy sacrament and extreme unction to administer to the deluded creature in his dying moments. But supposing these to have been ever so good in themselves, the Popish doctrine about them rendered them utterly unavailable to any peace or comfort. For it is the fixed doctrine of Popery, That the good intention of the administrator is essential to the efficacy of the sacraments. But how could the dying man, or any man, be sure of the good intention of his priest? Must he venture his eternal welfare on what it is impossible for any man, or indeed any but the heart-searching God to discern? Or, if he should have been so lucky as to have hit on a sincere and well-meaning priest; how could he be sure of the good intention of the Bishop who ordained him, and so forth (*in infinitum*) for ever.

After all, supposing all these grounds of comfort to have been good and valid,—it was but a dismal prospect the dying man could have, while the best he was allowed to expect, was to be thrown into purgatory;—till his priests prayed him out of it, for a piece of money left to them by him in his testament (what if he had none to leave?); or paid to them by his friends on his behalf, —(and what if they should neglect him?) * Ah! poor wretch! Leave all thy friends and all thy enjoyments, —to be forthwith, on thy breath going out, cast into a fire as hot as hell,—to ly and fry and burn there, till a period no one can tell how long. What heart would not bleed, to think of thy wretched case! Methinks such doctrine is more than enough to distract the dying, and to kill the surviving relations. To think of parting with our dear friends, on the assured prospect of their being cast into the fire of purgatory; is it possible, that any heart can be so void of feeling, as to be capable of bearing it? The prophecy does not exaggerate the anxiety, distraction and terror which such doctrine must have created in peoples minds,—when it represents the matter in the following words: " And in
" those

* See Note at the end, No. IV.

" those days shall men seek death and shall not find it ; " and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from " them." Rev. ix. 6. And well might the Romish clergy be represented, as *having breast-plates of iron*, in the 9th verse of that chapter ; as being utterly incapable of feeling. The Apostle would not have Christians to *sorrow* for dying or deceased godly friends, *as those that have no hope*, 1 Thes. iv. 13. But the Popish doctrine says, that they should sorrow to distraction ; nay, even to death.—It needs not be imagined, to be a desirable or easy matter, to go to purgatory. Purgatory, they say, is a fire ; not in hell indeed, but very near it, on the very borders of it, with only a small chafin or opening between hell and it ; wherein the souls of saints must ly and burn, till (either in person or by proxy, as formerly explained) they have discharged the last farthing due for their sins,—which they had not paid by prayers, fastings, penances, satisfactions and such like, in this world *.—But blessed be God there is no such place † ! Let us next take a view,

(3.) Of the uncharitableness of the Popish religion. Popery is a bottomless abyss of uncharitableness ‡. As just now hinted, the best that almost the best of them is allowed to expect when he dies, is to be thrown into purgatory, to ly there perhaps thousands of years. It is a most rare privilege to be exempted from it. And no one, according to the true import of the Popish doctrine, has any greater security of being exempted from it,—than the Pope's word, who must himself be prayed out of it.

And by the bye, if he can pardon sins, and exempt people from going to purgatory at all ; if he has the keys of the kingdom of heaven hanging at his girdle, and can do whatever he pleases ; — and all this he pretends to : He must be a monster of uncharitableness and cruelty too, who does not employ his power to the utmost,—pardon all sins, (at least, of those in communion with him),

* See the Note at the end, No. V.

† See the Note at the end, No. VI.

‡ See the Note at the end, No. VII.

him), except all from purgatory and hell too, and carry them all to heaven with him. Nay, but he is wiser than to do so,—wiser than to exercise his pretended power any farther for any, than may serve his own interest, power and grandeur.—It does not fall directly in our way, and therefore we shall but just mention the uncharitableness of Popery to all that died before the resurrection and ascension of our Saviour. As they doom the saints now to purgatory; they alledge that none of all the believing fathers under the Old Testament dispensation went to heaven when they died,—but were detained in a place which they call *Limbus patrum*; not indeed in torments, they are so good as to say, but without the blissful vision of the ever-blessed God,—till our Lord took them to heaven with him at his ascension. David, however, we are sure never dreamed of such a place; otherwise, he would never have said, “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” Psal. lxxiii. 24. And, upon such an uncharitable supposition, Christ’s promise to the thief on the cross must have failed of its accomplishment; “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke xxiii. 43.

But we must not forget to mention their cruel judgment (as the National Covenant of Scotland calls it) against infants departing without the Sacrament. If a child happen to die unbaptised; they don’t say, it is true, he goes to purgatory or hell,—but neither will they allow he goes to heaven. They have in their infinite folly contrived a place for all such infants as die without baptism by themselves, which they call *Limbus infantum*; where they are not indeed at all tormented, they are so kind as to say, but neither are they happy,—being doomed to eternal want. But this must certainly be infinite misery. The loss of God and of all blessedness to an immortal soul, capable of the enjoyment of it,—is such a loss as must be infinitely insupportable. And methinks it is not less cruel to relations, than to infants themselves. For people to know that the fruit of their bodies are assuredly in such intolerable

lerable misery, must at least be a torment next to the feeling of it. But they have an interest to serve, by keeping people in such perplexing agonies,—the pitiful interest of draining a little money from their pockets, for the great toil of *christening* their children, as they absurdly call baptising them *.

But where is there any ground for such a cruel and unmerciful judgment against infants dying without baptism? the promise is to them, as well as to their believing parents, Acts ii. 39. And therefore they must have a title to baptism, the seal of the promise: At the same time that no one can say, but they have the thing signified too, without contradicting the Judge himself, Mat. xix. 14. “Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come to me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Moreover, to crown all, they deny so much as the possibility of salvation to all not belonging to the church of Rome; which, at best, is only a *particular* church, though they nonsensically call it the *Catholic* church. Nay, let a man be ever so found in all the doctrines

* If they could *christen*, that is, christianize or make children Christians, it would be worth their parents pains to give them *something*. But the absurd practice of calling baptism—*christening*, supposes two gross Popish errors. (1.) That the children, even of Christian parents, are not Christians till they be baptised. And the uncharitable practice of a certain reformed church, in denying Christian burial to infants dying unbaptised, is surely built on this cruel judgment. (2.) That baptism christianizes or makes all those who are baptised Christians.—As to the first of these, the children of Christian parents are Christians. The Apostle says, *they are holy*, Rom. xi. 16. If they were not Christians, they could certainly have no title to one of the most special and distinguished ordinances of the New Testament and privileges of Christians. And the ridiculous practice of suspending the title of infants to baptism, on a profession of faith and obedience made by godfathers and godmothers,—is practically a denying of infant-baptism, as the birth-right privilege of the children of Christian parents. *The Directory for the public Worship of God*, in the church of Scotland, instructs ministers to inform their congregations, on occasion of administering baptism,—That infants are Christians and foederally holy before baptism, and therefore are they to be baptised.—As to the last of these, it makes baptism a mere spell or charm, according to the true genius of Popery. Whereas baptism, like every other external mean, works effectually, —only by the working of the Holy Ghost, and the blessing of Christ by whom it is instituted.

doctrines of the oracles of God,— if he dare to call in question their unwritten traditions, or to transgres any of the decrees of their church,— they forthwith damn him for an heretic to eternal perdition ; and, when it is in the power of their hands— to the flames : As if a man could not be saved by Jesus Christ, but with the good leave of the Pope. But enough of this. Let us now take a short view,

(4.) Of the cruelty of the Popish religion. By being so monstrously uncharitable, as just now explained, it is proportionably cruel. No sooner is a man condemned for an heretic, by his ghostly judges, than he is delivered over by the merciful Church (forsooth) to the secular power,—for being put to death in the flames, or in some more cruel and barbarous manner. All the power of the Pagan dragon was for many hundreds of years exercised by the Antichristian dragon, as you read in Rev. xiii. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. “ And I stood upon the sand “ of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, ha-“ ving seven heads and ten horns, and upon his hornsten “ crowns, and upon his heads the name of Blasphemy: “ And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and “ his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the “ mouth of a lion ; and the dragon gave him his power, “ and his seat, and great authority :—And there was gi-“ ven unto him, a mouth speaking great things, and blas-“ phemies; and power was given unto him to continue “ forty and two months : And he opened his mouth in “ blasphemy against God, to blasphemine his name, and “ his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven: And “ it was given unto him to make war with the saints, “ and to overcome them : And power was given him “ over all kindreds and tongues and nations.”—Many volumes have been written ; and many more might still be written, of the cruelies, persecutions and mas- sacres of the Popish church. For above twelve hun- dred years *, she maintained a steady, resolute and con- tinued war against all that but muttered a testimony against her tyranny, superstitions and idolatries. Her cruelty

* Referring to the thousand two hundred and three score days or years of Antichrist's reign.

cruelty rose to the degree of perfect madness, when she felt herself attacked in her tenderest part,—the merchandise she had made of pardons, indulgencies and the like; by *Luther* and our other reformers, in the sixteenth century. One * has computed, that in a few years after the year 1540, no fewer than nine hundred thousand were put to death for the cause of Christ. In the year 1641, unnumbered thousands and myriads of Protestants, men, women and children, were massacred in *Ireland* in a few weeks †. Towards the latter end of the last century, about five hundred thousand Protestants were forced out of *France* into banishment; besides uncounted multitudes that could not escape the vigilance of the guards that were set to intercept them,—and that were, on various deceitful pretences, put to death in the cruelest manner imaginable at home ‡.

Nor is the cruelty of the Romish beast one whit abated, provided only he had leave to show his teeth. Not more early than the beginning of the present century, people have been burnt by the Inquisition in *Portugal*, or rather roasted alive; the king and the royal family looking on and feasting their eyes with the horrid spectacle;—and, to the disgrace of humanity, (I had almost said, to the disgrace of Beelzebub, the prince of devils) refusing a few more faggots to dispatch the miserable sufferers,—though earnestly and repeatedly supplicated by them for the wretched favour §.

But, to turn our thoughts from such a horrible subject; it is not an easy thing to die, though ever so tenderly handled by the most affectionate friends: What then must it be to die, in the circumstances we have mentioned. Words are wanting, whereby to set forth how doleful it must be. But

2. Let us contrast with what has been said,—The sure grounds which our holy Protestant Reformed religion lays

* *Alestedius* (*Chron. Testium*), quoted by *Durham* on *Rev. xi.*

† See the Note at the end, No. VIII.

‡ See the Note at the end, No. IX.

§ See the Note at the end, No. X.

lays down from the sacred scriptures, for faith and hope, peace and comfort in death. We have seen, that Popists are *miserable comforters* to their best friends, and *cruel tormentors* to all that dissent from their monstrously incredible creed *. Let us now take a brief view of the mercifulness and comfortableness of Protestantism; while it lays before all sure grounds of hope and comfort in death. These are daily insisted on and shall now be but just named.

(1.) Genuine Protestantism lays before us—an everlasting righteousness;—the righteousness of the Surety our Lord Jesus Christ; his doing and dying; his compleat fulfilment of the precepts of the law of works and full bearing of the penalty of it; the propitiatory and satisfactory offering which he made of himself to incensed justice for sinners: Whereby all that trust to it, as the sure foundation "which God hath laid in Zion" are infallibly secured against the curse of the law, and intitled to eternal life; and wherein they may, without fear or dread, venture through the dark and gloomy valley of the shadow of death, in the assured and comfortable hope of a blessed immortality. "Thus saith the Lord, "God, Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, "a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: He that believeth, shall not make haste." Isa. xxviii. 16. "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, "that are far from righteousness: I bring near my "righteousness, it shall not be far off; and my salvation shall not tarry." Isa. xlvi. 12, 13.—This is an infinitely better bottom whereon to venture through death,—than all the Popish pardons, dispensations, indulgencies, austeries, fastings, penances, pilgrimages, sacraments or *viaticums*: Nay, and infinitely more so than all the good works, repentance, and such like,—proposed by Popish Protestants, the legal preachers of our times.

(2.) It lays before us—the promise of the Spirit of all grace and holiness; gradually to make us meet, and at length to make us perfectly meet, to be partakers

* See the Note at the end, No. XI.

of the inheritance of the saints in light. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

It is an eternal truth, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. But how is it to be obtained? Not by Popish mortifications, or legal endeavours,—but by a powerful work of the Holy Ghost on our hearts. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Tit. iii. 5, 6.

(3.) It lays before us—the promise of eternal life; on the sure bottom of Christ's purchase of it, by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law: To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. iv. 4, 5. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." 1 John v. 11.—This is a better ground whereon to rest, for eternal life,—than the Pope's word, pronounced in the most solemn absolution; even supposing him to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven hanging at his girdle, as he arrogantly pretends.

(4.) It lays before us—the promise of final perseverance; even that no believer shall come short of what God hath promised him. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer. xxxii. 40. "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand: My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them

"out of my Father's hand." John x. 28, 29. "Whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John iv. 14.—Methinks God's promise is a security infinitely above all comparison with all the Popish *confirmations*, prayers of the priests, or even the blessing of his pretended Holiness.

(5.) It lays before us—the promise of an unstinged death; that, though for good and wise reasons, we must go the way of all the earth,—the sting of death, the curse, shall not touch us. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Hos. xiii. 14. So that we may face even the king of terrors, without fear or dread of being hurt by him. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Psal. xxiii. 4.—One needs not hesitate a moment to judge this to be better encouragement for a dying man, than a hammer put into his coffin for calling at the door of purgatory or heaven, or candles put into it for lighting him through purgatory,—as have sometimes been the pitiful cordials of Popery.

(6.) It lays before us—the promise of Christ himself being with us in death,—to support and comfort us, and to perfect his own good work in us. "I will not leave you comfortless, (says he); I will come to you." John xiv. 18. Christ still prays for all saints, as in John xvii. 24. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."—And who would not prefer this to the sacrament—after he is incapable of receiving it properly; or to extreme unction?

(7.) It lays before us—the promise of an immediate and direct passage to the mansions of everlasting blessedness;

ness ; without being disquieted therein by the fire or smoke of purgatory. See Luke xvi. 22.

3. Let us consider, that whatever dark nights or sharp conflicts the Church may have to undergo, even in this period of Antichrist's falling ; these sure grounds of comfort shall never be again obscured to such a degree as in the times of Popery.—The Church suffered the severest trial that she ever at any time underwent, at the begun downfal of Antichrist in the middle of the sixteenth century, as you read in Rev. xi. 7,—10.

"And when they shall have finished their testimony,
"the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit
"shall make war against them ; and shall overcome them,
"and kill them : And their dead bodies shall lie in the
"street of the great city, which spiritually is called So-
"dom and Egypt ; where also our Lord was crucified :
And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues,
"and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and
"an half ; and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be
put in graves : And they that dwell upon the earth
"shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall
send gifts one to another ; because these two pro-
phets tormented them that dwelt on the earth."

And it is likely enough she may have just such another conflict to suffer, and a second slaying of the witnesses to undergo, at the utter and final overthrow of that man of sin. And as that period must be now drawing n, we had need to be well fortified for it.

But we have this to comfort us ; the night shall never be so dark again, as it has been. As the trumpets brought Antichrist gradually forward to his height ; so the vials, which exactly correspond to the trumpets, undoing, as it were, what they did,—must bring him gradually forward to his destruction. And whatever struggles he may now make for power or life, like a dying beast ; they shall issue in his death, and the Church's final triumph over him. See Rev. xviii. throughout.—

The temple of God is now opened in heaven, and there is seen in his temple the ark of his testament, as in Rev. xi.

9. The import plainly is ; the former is opened, so as never

never again to be shut,—the latter is seen, so as never again to be hid. People are restored to the free use of their Bibles, which they had been forbidden in the times of Popery; and shall never be deprived of it again. Accordingly, pure doctrine, particularly the doctrine of Christ as the true ark and refuge for sinful souls, is restored,—and shall never be obscured again as it had been in the times of Popish darkness. And the pure worship of God is set up, and shall never be corrupted again; as it had been in the times of Anti-christian superstition and idolatry.

4. Thus whatever storms may in the mean time fall on the Church,—Christians may now die in the full assurance of their soon blowing over; and the Church still flourishing more and more. It must afford a dying man sad thoughts of heart, to see his family reduced low, and in all appearance to be brought still lower and lower. Whereas it must be no small comfort to one in that condition, to have the prospect of his family's prospering and doing well. Thus it must have been sorrowful consideration to dying saints in the days of Antichrist's growing tyranny, to leave the Church of God behind them under the feet of their oppressors and the oppression waxing still heavier and heavier. Whereas it must not be a little comforting to dying Christians now, to observe the accomplishment of the promise of the Church's deliverance out of Antichristian Babylon—begun; while they have the assurance of God's word, that what he hath begun he will perfect.

—“ We are not now living within the period which
“ was assigned to the rise and enlargement of Anti-
“ christ's kingdom; but in that latter period which de-
“ termines him to a gradual, and at length finished down
“ fal. And it is not in this period, that our Lord will
“ relinquish the conquests which he hath made from
“ Antichrist, but will restore and enlarge the same.”

We shall now apply this part of our subject. Which may here see,

1. Good reason to hope for a speedy blowing over the storms that presently threaten the Protestant Church.

es. Things, particularly, through the British empire, never wore a more threatening aspect since the Reformation, than at this day. For several years, we have been at war, I may say, with ourselves; and that every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation,—is our Lord's own remark. And we are now threatened with, and in fact engaged in, a war with the ancient and hereditary enemies of our religion and liberties. But what is worst of all; we don't seem to be set for the defence of the Protestant interests, either at home or abroad;—while we have established the Popish religion in the extensive province of Quebec, so far as to secure the Popish clergy there in a liberal maintenance, —only leaving it to the King to provide for Protestant ministers: And while we have repealed certain penal statutes against Papists in this country,—permitting those dangerous enemies of our religion and liberties, Popish Missionaries and Jesuits, to disseminate their wicked principles, and set up again their execrable idolatries *.

But they need not vaunt themselves, nor need the friends of the Protestant cause give themselves up to desponding fears,—as if the deadly wound that was given to the Antichristian beast at the Reformation, was going to be healed in this land. For God has begun to pour out the vials of his wrath on Antichrist; and all the friends of the Reformation-standard may live and die in the faith of it,—that he will go on to pour out the remainder of them, till he has finished his destruction.
 “ Another angel cried mightily with a strong voice,
 “ saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen: Her
 “ plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning,
 “ and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire:
 “ For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her: Re-
 “ joice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles
 “ and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.”
 “ Rev. xviii. 1, 2, 8, 20.

2. Good reason to be thankful for God's ordering our lot, in such a blessed period of the Church. Bad as our days are,— they are good, happy and peaceful, on

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* See the Note at the end, No. XII.

a comparison with the dismal times of Antichrist's reign. For the sake of the Lord's work going on in the Protestant churches,—Europe has been a paradise ever since the commencement of the Reformation, comparatively to what it had been for ages before. We now dwell, according to the promise, Isa. xxxii. 18. *in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;* —while in the days of our fathers, life, liberty, property and all were in almost continual perils; through the ravages of war, the tyranny of princes, or the cruelty and cunning of wicked priests.— And how valuable are our Protestant privileges! The precious Bible! the precious ordinances! and the precious privilege of liberty to use and improve them! “Say not thou, “What is the cause that the former days were better “than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.” Eccles. vii. 10.

3. Good reason why we should be valiant for the maintenance and defence of our Protestant privileges. Our worthy ancestors transmitted them down to us, at a very great expence,—the expence of many thousands of lives, not to mention much treasure. What they bought dear, we enjoy cheap. But let us not therefore undervalue them. Agreeably to what you have been hearing, a death-bed will shew the value of them. We are not called to defend them in such manner as our fathers were. We do not need to resist unto blood. And that is our great mercy. But every season has its peculiar duties; and every thing is beautiful in its season. We are called to defend our privileges, by a steady and resolved attachment to the Reformation-standard, in opposition to the Laodicean indifference of the age about it. This is eminently the duty of our times. Accordingly, the Lord requires us to do it with all our might; *ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,* Jude 3. He encourages us to do it; *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,* Rev. ii. 10. See chap. iii. 10. We have particularly this encouragement, That we shall have the faithful and true

Witnes

Witness on our head, which must insure our success,—as you read in Rev. xix. 11,—16. In one word, it will be no uneasiness to us on a death-bed, to reflect, that we have spent and been spent for the cause and testimony of Jesus. It would be a blessedness next to heaven itself, to end one's days, as blessed Paul did his.
 " I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my
 " departure is at hand : I have fought a good fight, I
 " have finished my course, I have kept the faith :
 " Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righ-
 " teousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall
 " give me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto
 " all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv.
 6,—8.

THE CONTRAST, &c.

REV. xiv. 13.

*And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write,
 Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from hence-
 forth : yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from
 their labours, and their works do follow them.*

SERMON III.

THIS world is a place of sin and sorrow, of vanity and deceit, of disappointment and vexation. Whoever promise themselves happiness from it, will only disappoint, and consequently torment themselves. *Solomon* made the experiment; and all he got by it, was vexation of spirit, Eccles. i. 14. People needed not grudge leaving

leaving this world, but be happy at the prospect of it, provided only they were sure of arriving safely at *the better country, that is, the heavenly.* And blessed be God, that, instead of leaving us at any uncertainty in the matter, he has given us the very highest assurance of it ! “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, “from henceforth : yea, saith the Spirit.” And as a support under all present evils, he has assured us, death will be an end of them : And as an encouragement to diligence in well-doing, under all the present hazards and sufferings under which it lies,—he has also assured us, that nothing we do for his sake shall be forgotten by him ; but as it is in the mean time kindly regarded by him, so it shall follow us into the other world,—as a voucher for our faith and a testimony of our interest in the blessed Forerunner ; as in the text now again read,

Having formerly explained the comfortable truth which is here declared ; “Blessed are the dead who “die in the Lord ;”—as also the season to which it specially refers, “From henceforth :” We shall now consider the confirmation of it, “yea, saith the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labours, and their works “do follow them.”—We have here a twofold confirmation of it. It is divinely attested,—yea, saith the Spirit ; and it is manifestly evinced,—*that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them.*

1st, It is divinely attested ; yea, saith the Spirit. Here we shall only observe, that his testimony is *sure, registered and experienced.*

1. The Spirit’s testimony is a sure testimony ; what there can be no falsehood or uncertainty in, but such as may be most assuredly relied on.—The Pope has sometimes passed his word on it, that whoever would do certain pieces of service to *his holiness*,—as anciently to go in a croisade for recovering *the holy land*, and more lately to murder those whom he called *heretics*, that is, good Christians ; he has sometimes published a bull, promise, or insurance, I say, that whoever would do so,—should have a plenary remission of all their sins, and go directly to paradise, without being detained a moment.

moment in purgatory *. But what signifies his word of honour to any such purpose? It is to be detested, as a piece of the most horrible presumption. What avails any such bull, promise or insurance? It is to be abominated as the most heaven-daring blasphemy. "No heretics, says a Popish historian, were so pernicious to the church of Rome as the *Lemists* or *Waldenses*; because, among other reasons, they had a great appearance of piety, lived justly before men, believed all things well of God, and held all the articles of the Creed; only (they were guilty of one unpardonable fault), they blasphemed the church of Rome,—the Pope and his clergy:" Which methinks was as great a commendation, as could well have been given of them.

Well, let poor deluded Papists, who are given up of God to strong délusion that they should believe a lie,— trust to such arrant cheats; it is our great mercy, that we have the testimony of the Spirit of all truth to depend on, that they are blessed who die in the Lord. The Papists say, they are blessed who die in the communion of the church of Rome. Nay, but says the Spirit of God, they are blessed who die in the Lord;—who have renounced all merit of their good works; who have cast all their best righteousness as well as their worst, their best works as well as their worst, behind their backs,—and have fled, wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked—as they are, to Christ, as having all righteousness and salvation in him for them; who have ventured their all for time and eternity, on the single but sure bottom of Christ's everlasting righteousness.

Viewed in this light, this comfortable truth contains the great promise of the gospel,—even an insurance of full and everlasting salvation, and of an immediate and direct passage to it at death; on the single but safe foundation of the doing and dying of the Lord. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. lv. 22.

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Thus

* See the Note at the end, No. XIII.

Thus it was the gospel of the Old Testament. And it is the gospel of the New too, Acts xvi. 31. " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Rest on Christ for all salvation,— without admitting a doubt of it, on such a sure ground. Rest not on your faith for it, more than on any other of your works,—in the way of assuring yourselves of salvation, when once you know you have believed ; but rest on Christ for it,—assuring yourselves of all salvation, intirely and wholly on the bottom of his surety-righteousness brought near to you by the gospel. Without this, we would have no gospel ; those who do not preach this, preach no gospel. This is the gospel which we have in commission to preach to every huinan creature, Mark xvi. 15, 16. " Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature : He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

2. This testimony of the Spirit of God,—insuring salvation to sinners, on the footing of the righteousnesses of the Lord Christ,—insuring a blessed death to them, on the footing of his cursed death,—is registered, for their fullest security, in the records of heaven. When a man passes a deed of conveyance, he consents to the registery thereof in the public and authentic records of the kingdom ; to which all whom it concerns have access. Just so, God, for our great confirmation and establishment, encouragement and comfort in life and death, has registered his gracious promise in the blessed Bible. It is to be found in the very first gospel-promise, Gen. iii. 15. " And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel :" Which, as formerly hinted, was a promise and insurance of a compleat recovery from all the ruins of the fall, and consequently, of eternal life,—on the footing of the satisfaction to be given by the Surety who should be the seed of the woman, in having his heel bruised. And all the subsequent promises of the gospel are only illustrations, explications and amplifications of this original and primary promise. Accordingly, the promise of all blessedness on the footing of the cursed death of the

Surety,

Surety, and consequently an insurance of all blessedness to all that are in him,— is to be found almost every where throughout the whole Bible ; — and in a very great variety of expression too ; for the more easy understanding of it, and the more readily to engage our attention and attract our regard to it. See particularly Gen. xxii. 18. Isa. xxviii. 16. xlvi. 17. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Rev. iii. 20.

We may add here, that God has been at an infinite expence of power and goodness in making and maintaining this register. Very early he built a register-office, and still keeps it in good repair ; though Satan, and one Antichrist or another have, from the very first erection of it, employed all the battering rams and engines of hell and earth to demolish it. And a stately and glorious fabric it is ; *beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion.* You'll easily perceive we mean *the Church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of truth.* And he furnished ready scribes, (as Ezra is called, chap. vii. 6.) from time to time, for registering this great record ; in all the illustrations, explications and amplifications he was pleased to make of it : *Holy men of God, who spoke and wrote too, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* Nay, he has from time to time raised up *Apolloses, eloquent men and mighty in the Scriptures* ; to read, expound and inculcate this blessed record on the consciences and hearts of his people. Even when the register-office was on the point of being battered to the ground by the Antichristian dragon, and the register itself burnt, (and many copies of it even burnt) ; he had two witnesses (a number sufficient in law) who prophesied, read and expounded this record, though clothed in sackcloth, Rev. xi. 3.

We may further add here, that this blessed record is sworn and sealed ; to give us all possible security for the truth of it, and all possible encouragement to trust it, and even to venture through death and the grave on the credit of it. It is sworn by the great God, and that in the most solemn manner ; nay, and he began very early in this manner to attest it. “ For when God
“ made

" made promise to Abraham, because he could swear
 " by no greater, he sware by himself ; saying, Surely,
 " blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will
 " multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endur-
 " ed, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by
 " the greater ; and an oath for confirmation is to them
 " an end of all strife : wherein God, willing more ab-
 " bundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the im-
 " mutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath :
 " that by two immutable things in which it was im-
 " possible for God to lie, we might have a strong con-
 " solation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the
 " hope set before us." Heb. vi. 13,—18. And it is also
 sealed, I may say, with the great seal of heaven, in the
 solemn ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper,—
 as it was antiently in the typical sacrifices, and particu-
 larly in the solemn ordinances of circumcision and the
 passover.

We may here see, by the way, the grievous absurdity
 of the Popish doctrine,—that it is dangerous for common
 people, or laymen, to read their Bibles ; and the dread-
 ful cruelty of their practice, in with-holding those oracles
 of God from them. Strange ! Not allow people to be-
 come acquainted with their charter. Should Popish
 priests or any else go about to persuade gentlemen, ne-
 ver to read or inspect their charters,—they would be
 hissed at with indignation ; if not banished, as having
 ill designs on them. But it is still infinitely worse, to
 denude people of liberty to look into their charter to
 the heavenly inheritance ; by how much it is more va-
 luable than all earthly possessions.

3. This testimony of the Spirit is experienced and
 felt to be true, in some measure, by all saints. Having
 ventured their all for time and eternity on the divine
 testimony, they begin to feel the truth of it. Heaven-
 ly blessedness is begun in them. They are blessed with
 the earnest of the heavenly inheritance, the begun en-
 joyment of that happiness which is laid up for them in
 the covenant of promise, Eph. i. 13, 14. The blessedness
 of heaven is begun in them, inasmuch as they are par-
 kers

kers of grace ; for grace is glory begun, even as glory is grace perfected,—grace is glory in the bud, even as glory is grace in the full blown flower. “ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness.” Rom. xiv. 17. ; compared with 2 Cor. iii. 18. “ We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord :” —*from glory to glory* ; that is, from one degree of grace to another, till grace arrive at such perfection as to be glory. It is begun in them, inasmuch as they have peace, inward peace,—the well grounded faith of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and solid peace of conscience through the sprinkling of the peace-speaking blood of Jesus. “ For the kingdom of God is—peace,” Rom. xiv. 17. ; compared with Heb. xii. 24. “ Ye are come—to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” It is begun in them, inasmuch as they have “ joy in the Holy Ghost,” —some experience, less or more, of his speaking the promise into their consciences and hearts,—with such power and sweetnes, as fills them with all joy and peace in believing ; as the Apostle prays on behalf of the Romans, chap. xv. 13. But this is no small degree of heavenly blessedness. “ For the kingdom of God is—joy in the Holy Ghost.” Rom. xiv. 17.

Thus they have the testimony of their spiritual experience, or of their spiritual senses, to the truth of the Spirit’s testimony. And though this be not the ground of faith, but the Spirit’s testimony in the written word ; it is not a little encouraging and confirming to it. One does not doubt of the truth of a testimony that he feels to be true. A son does not question, but his father will give him the inheritance of which he has already given him a part.

Nay, the Spirit sometimes bears such sensible testimony in the heart to the truth of his testimony in the word,—as to overpower all present workings of unbelief, and to raise the believer to a full and comfortable assurance. “ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,

" spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. viii. 16. As the saints will readily be favoured with this glorious foretaste of heaven, proportionably to the weight of work or warfare laid before them ; so the martyrs were usually blessed with a large measure thereof,—enabling them to face death or crueller usage with courage and fortitude, with magnanimity and joy, so as to confound and triumph over their very persecutors *. Take the first New-Testament martyr for an example, Acts vii. 54,—60. Only read the passage, and you will not hesitate a moment to say, whether of the two was most happy ; — the *Jews* who not only persecuted *Stephen*, but who gnashed their teeth for very rage, the most tormenting of all passions ; or, *Stephen*, who was persecuted by them, but who scarce felt the pains of death, for the abounding of the joys of the Holy Ghost, —which is just heavenly bliss.

Before we proceed further, we may here see,—the way to joy, and not only to a blessed, but joyful death ; it is to live by faith, to assure ourselves of the truth of the Spirit's testimony, " Blessed are the dead " who die in the Lord,"—taking all the benefit and comfort of the insurance of blessedness in death on the footing of the Lord's death—couched therein.—All who know any thing at all of religion, wish for joy ; but the generality take the wrong way to obtain it. They would have joy in themselves, and then they would believe ; or, which is much the same thing, they would have something in or about themselves whereon to ground or at least to encourage their faith,—and then they would believe. Genuine Christians will never obtain joy in this way. And it is the great mercy of any people, that they do not. Wo to such as seek and obtain (what they count) joy in themselves. The true way to true joy is, to believe ; resting assuredly on the divine testimony. It is *in believing* that *joy and peace* is obtained, Rom. xv. 13.

Thus this great truth is divinely attested.

2dly, It is manifestly evinced. It must be a blessed thing to die in the Lord ; they must be blessed, who do

* See the Note at the end, No. XIV.

so: *They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

1. *They rest from their labours.* The Greek word which is here translated *labours*, is used mostly, if not always in the New Testament, to signify such as are attended with uneasiness and pain; toil and fatigue, vexation and sorrow. And it is manifestly used in this sense here, as contradistinguished to works in the last clause of the verse. And such labours are in general of two sorts; those that are simply and in all respects such, and those that are such only in a certain degree. Death will be a sweet rest to all saints from both sorts.

(1.) Death, to all that die in the Lord, will be a total and everlasting rest from all those of the former sort; that is, from all adversities and crosses, from all vexations and sorrows, from whatever airth they can arise, —whether from ourselves, the world, Satan or God.— Afflictions have no good in them, whatever good God bring out of them.

[1.] It will be an intire and eternal rest to them from all vexations and sorrows arising from themselves.—In the present state, we ourselves, by reason of our discontented, fretful and murmuring tempers, are our greatest crosses. We make real crosses much heavier than they really are; and when crosses are wanting, we make them to ourselves. It is truly hard to say, whether we suffer most from real crosses we do feel; or from imaginary ones which we never feel, but only fear. It is unjust to impute this only to certain *melancholy* people. For we are all in some degree melancholy; we are all, more or less, beside ourselves. As there is not a man or a woman in the world in *perfect* health; so neither is there any in the *perfect* exercise of reason.

—Immediately on forsaking God the chief good, the alone satisfying portion of souls,—it was impossible but we must have become discontented, fretful and unsatisfied. Nay, instantly on sin's seizing the soul,—disease also infected the body, like a contagion, or by contagion. It became of such a *crisis* and temperature, as to be incapable of bearing difficulties and afflictions with proper fortitude

fortitude and resolution ; even as a weak and sore back feels more from its own weakness and soreness, than from its burden. Nay, our constitution suffered such a shock, as to make us imagine things to our grief and vexation, which have no being ; even as a person that has got a stroke on the head, turns giddy and fancies that the most stable things are moving. This is the melancholy state with us all in some degree ; though to a far greater height in some than in others. Even the grace of God does not cure it. We find *Heman*, one of the most distinguished saints of the Old-Testament, greatly afflicted with it all his life-long. See Psal. lxxxviii. throughout ; particularly verse 15. “ I am afflicted and “ ready to die, from my youth up : while I suffer thy “ terrors, I am distracted.” Nay the religious exercises of genuine saints are more influenced by it, than the generality are ready to apprehend. It is no great wonder, to see people who have comparatively the advantage of cheerful tempers, little given to doubts and fears. But it requires a very eminent measure of grace to raise melancholy people above them.

But death will at once cure all saints of all their discontent, fretfulness, murmuring and melancholy. No inhabitant of the better country shall say, or have ground to say, *I am sick*. The soul shall be at once cured of all its spiritual plagues,—of all its unbelief, blindness, vanity, earthliness and inactivity. And being in the mean time in a state of separation from the body,—cannot be influenced by any of the diseases under which it once laboured, nay, nor by its death; but waits patiently, though earnestly, for reunion to it in glory, in perfect and everlasting fitness to keep pace with it in all heavenly exercises.—Now, O what an inestimable mercy must it be to be thus delivered from all those anxieties, perplexities, doubts, fears, torments and miseries, which in the present state arise from our unhappiness. The pleasure of a recovery from the agonizing fit of the gout, stone or gravel,—is but a faint image of it.

[2.] It will be a total and everlasting rest to them, from all trials and tribulations arising from the world.—From the unkindnesses of the world. The Lord's people have usually a large share of the frowns of the world; and a very small portion of its smiles. The world from hatred grudges them its good things; and God from love withholds them,—that they may not be entangled and retarded by them in their journey heavenwards.—Particularly, from the persecutions of the world, which may perhaps be specially intended here. From what the Apostle calls emphatically *cruel mockings*; a being made a jest of or lightly esteemed by the world that live at large,—for serious godliness, conscientious strictness, and a resolute attachment to the good ways of the Lord. These, I say, are eminently *cruel mockings*. The Psalmist, or rather, our Lord Jesus himself, says, *Reproach hath broken my heart*, Psal. lxix. 20.—From all hazards and sufferings, imprisonments, dragoonings, deaths or more barbarous usages that were suffered under Antichristian tyranny; or may yet be suffered under it before it be finally abolished. Death sets all saints everlastingly beyond the reach of all persecutors. “There the “wicked cease from troubling; there the weary be at “rest,” Job iii. 17. And a sweet and pleasant rest it has been to unnumbered thousands of the saints,—who are now come out of all tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and are therefore before the throne of God. Persecutors may defame and curse their memory, dig their bones out of their graves, carry them before their blasphemous tribunals, condemn them for wicked heretics, and then burn their old rotten bones to ashes,—as the Papists were wont to do. But what is all this to them, who are in the mean time perfectly happy in the presence of God and the Lamb. *There the prisoners rest together*, in spite of hell and Roine; *they hear not the voice of the oppressor*, Job iii. 18. They may torment themselves, and gnash their teeth for very pain; they only vent their impotent malice, but cannot disquiet the dead in the Lord.

[3.] It will be a total and final rest to them from all the fiery darts and buffettings of Satan. It did not satisfy his malice to haunt them like a ghost all their life-long; but he would needs pursue them to the gates of the New Jerusalem. However, he can go no farther; he can tempt no longer.—We shall add here to what was said on a former head, that this is a very rueful and a very joyful parting; rueful on Satan's side, and joyful on the saint's part. Who saw and heard the devil, on being finally defeated by the Christian,—it would present him with a frightful image of the shame, agony and despair with which he was seized, on being of old cast down from heaven; as is represented, or perhaps only alluded to in Isa. xiv. 12. “How art thou fallen “from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning! how “art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken “the nations!” All the relief which he has in the mean time, from the agonies of his ill conscience and the terrors of his compearance before his awful Judge,—lies in the hellish satisfaction which he takes in harrassing the saints,—hereby attempting to divert his thoughts from the irremediable doom awaiting him, though at the same time hereby adding to his unequalled guilt. And now even that worthless satisfaction is taken from him. And by the prey being gradually taken from the mighty, he feels his insupportable doom coming surely on him. But his torment is not greater than the saint's joy, on being rid of such a malicious foe. It is such as that of mariners come safe to shore, after most narrowly escaping shipwreck. Or, it is like that of an army which had fought for life, liberty and all; and are come off victorious and triumphant,—after being almost vanquished and enslaved. Or, it is like that of a king come safe to his kingdom, after running the greatest hazard of being beggared.

[4.] It will be a final and blessed rest to them from all trials and tribulations wherewith they had been exercised in holy providence. All their afflictions of whatever sort were from providence; and no small trial had it sometimes been to them, to observe the signs

of an angry providence in their adversities. For all saints could more easily bear, that all the world were angry with them, than that their God and Father should be so. See Job xvi. 14. Psal. xxxviii. 1. And very heavy sometimes had the strokes of their Father's hand been. In Job's case, it lighted upon all he was and had. He lost all his children and all his substance in one day,—and that too, in such a way as carried in it pregnant symptoms of God's anger : Chap. 1. Nothing remained to him but a humoursome wife, to chide, tempt and torment him ; and three friends who added affliction to the afflicted,—by insisting on what was of every thing else most calculated to wound him, that his affliction was a sure evidence of his naughtiness and of God's wrath. But still it is a great matter, if a man have health, and can in patience possess his soul. Nay, but this is also taken from him. Satan is permitted to *smite him with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown*; so that *he took him a potherd to scrape himself withal, and he sat down among the ashes*: Chap. 11. And his spirit came also to be sorely wounded, as we read in chap. vi. 2, 3. “ O that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together ; for now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea : Therefore my words are swallowed up :”—(that is, I want language whereby to express my grief.) “ For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit ; The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.” Such, I say, had sometimes been the strokes of God's hand.

But death is the last. “ The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” 1 Cor. xv. 26. Death will be the last stroke of his chastising hand. Heretofore, they were delivered from the sting of trouble, the curse, Rom. viii. 1. Gal. iii. 13. Now, they are delivered from trouble itself, even as a chastisement. No corruption now remaining in them, they stand in no more need of that medicine for purging it away. Being now arrived at full maturity, they are no longer liable

liable to the treatment of children. God now rejoices over them with joy, and rests in his love—without ever frowning on them, or suffering any thing to annoy them more.

(2.) Death, to all that die in the Lord, will be an intire and eternal rest from all *labours* of the latter sort too ; that is, from *all painful duties*. Duty in itself indeed is a pleasure, a privilege and blessedness. A great part of our present happiness lies in the performance of it ; and a great happiness it is. Psal. xix. 9, 10, 11. Nevertheless there are certain respects, in which it is a very great toil and labour. But death will at once set us free from it.—The mortification of sin, for example, by reason of our inbred and vehement love to it, is a very great toil and labour. It is a death, *a mortifying of the deeds of the body*. Rom. viii. 13. It is a crucifixion ; a *crucifying of the flesh, with the affections and lusts*. Gal. v. 24. It is a doing violence to one's self,—a laying violent hands on the old man, which is a part of our very selves. It is a being engaged in close fight, hand to hand, foot to foot, heart to heart, —every part of the new man resolutely opposing every part of the old man. “ For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh : And those are contrary the one to the other ; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Gal. v. 17. But death will put a happy end to this war. Then shall we lay down our arms, without ever needing to take them up again ; and a sweet and everlasting peace and quiet will ensue in the soul.

The performance, particularly, of external duties, by reason of our present weakness as well as unwillingness, is a very great toil and labour. It is seldom we can continue any length of time in religious exercises, without wearying. Nay, it is impossible but we must weary ; *the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*. Besides, it sometimes requires no small toil, to attain to ordinances. We know but little of that indeed, in comparison with our fathers ; who sometimes fought the good of their souls at the peril of their lives, and at great distances

distant too. But death will put a blessed end to all this weakness and fatigue. The redeemed about the throne *rest not day nor night*; saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.* And they never weary; *the joy of the Lord is their strength.* They shall be strengthened for supporting under an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And their food is ay at hand. John saw in the midst of the street of the New Jerusalem and on each side of the river of the water of life,—*the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month.* Rev. xxii. 1, 2.—Moreover, to fight a good fight, or to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, by reason of our own and other peoples' weaknesses, prejudices and corruptions,—is sometimes a very great toil and labour. But death will at once bring us to the land of perfect knowledge, harmony and love. Then shall the promise be full accomplished,—“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” Isa. xi. 9.

2. *Their works do follow them.* For explication of this, we shall consider the works here spoken of; and the import of their following those that die in the Lord.

(1.) We must consider the works here spoken of. And we may consider them, as good works, despised works, small works, intended works, and registered works.

[1.] We must consider them as *good* works. It has not been a little contended, what good works are. Some suppose mere moral works to be good works. Others fancy legal works to be good works. Some imagine superstitious works to be good works. And most people judge charitable works to be good works. All these are reckoned good works, and the doers of them to be good folks, by their respective admirers. Without staying on a particular discussion of these things,—we shall give you an infallible description of what

what the Spirit of God accounts good works. The inspired Apostle says, "The end of the commandment is charity; out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5. The end or intention of the commandment or law is charity. According to this unerring description, nothing can be designed a good work, which is not commanded. See Mat. xv. 9. Isa. viii. 20. The Apostle tells us, "Where no law is, there is no transgression." And consequently, where there is no law, there can be as little obedience.—Again, nothing can be designed a good work, which is not *charity*; which does not originate in the love of God and of our neighbour,—and which does not aim at a loving of God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind,—and a loving of our neighbour as ourselves. See Mat. xxii. 37,—40.—Further, nothing can be designed a good work, which does not flow from a *pure heart*,—a renewed heart, a heart purified by the Spirit of Christ. *They that are in the flesh, cannot please God*, Rom. viii. 8. See Mat. xii. 33.—Moreover, nothing can be designed a good work, which does not flow from a *good conscience*; a conscience sprinkled with the pacifying and purging blood of Jesus. It is through our consciences being sprinkled with his blood, that they are *purged from dead works to serve the living God*. Heb. ix. 14.—In one word, nothing can be designed a good work, which does not flow from *faith unfeigned*,—a faith which is in reality a renunciation of self, and a rest on Christ. *Without faith, it is impossible to please God**.

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* Faith doth not lie in good resolutions to be obedient to God's law; but in the rest of the soul on whole Christ for righteousness and salvation,—begun in justification and sanctification, and completed in glorification. And the believer is hereupon capacitated, quickened and invigorated, for resolving on all holy obedience and yielding it; finding grace insured in the promise, answerable to all duty enjoined in the precept. Phil. iv. 13: And he resolves on it and sets out in it accordingly.—Faith respects all Christ's offices; in the way of resting on him for all the benefit of them;—for righteousness and access to God, through him as a priest,—for saving illumination and continued teaching

The peculiar beauty of this description lies in running up the whole matter to faith, which unites with Christ, who is at once our righteousness and strength. And this our Lord shews to be the only practicable way of bringing forth fruit to God, John xv. 4, 5. "Abide in me, and I in you : As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine ; no more can ye, except ye abide in me : I am the vine, ye are the branches : He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit ; for without me ye can do nothing."

[2.] We may consider them as despised works. Though despised in the eyes of men, they are precious in the sight of God. The practice of godliness, instead of being valued by the world, is reproached as unaccountable nicety, singularity and preciseness. Even the manifestly wicked, with a brazen-faced impudence, will ask, What do the reputed godly more than others? Even those good works, which are greatly calculated to promote the glory of God and the interests of mankind, are sometimes reputed sedition and rebellion,—and are punished as if they were really such. Thus when Paul and Silas came with the glad tidings of everlasting life to Thessalonica, a very kind and beneficent action surely ; all the account which even the Jews made of it, was, *Those that have turned the world upside down are come hither also*, Acts xvii. 6. Nay our glorious Reformers, *Luther, Calvin, Knox* and others,—the very persons who, in the first verse of this chapter, are represented as *standing with the Lamb on the mount Zion, having his Father's name written on their foreheads*; these very worthies are now traduced by many

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teaching, by him as a prophet,—and for sanctification, and a being brought through all tribulation home to the kingdom of heaven, by him as a king. And in the faith of all the benefit of all his offices,—the believer gives himself to the Lord ;—to be ruled and absolutely determined by the law which he has enacted as a king, and published as a prophet. And in this way, he finds himself strengthened for all holy obedience. The more lively his faith is, the more hearty his resolutions are, and the more vigorous his obedience is. Psal. xxviii. 7.—And thus also his obedience is not the obedience of a slave, but of a son.

as the cause of seditions and rebellions, wars and desolations; and their laudable zeal for propagating the truth, and Christ-like endeavours for purging the temple of God of *buyers and sellers, thieves and robbers*,—are decried as fiery, and driving things to extremities; or at least are degraded as low as possible, even by those who would claim the credit of being their successors,—but without deserving it. But it is well, God does not judge of things as men—as such men do.

Again, they are not boasted of, nay, I may well say, they are even despised,—by the doers of them. If the world think little of their good works, they think as little of them themselves. Instead of being disposed with proud legalists to say,—“ Stand by thyself, “ come not near to me, for I am holier than thou,” they are every one of them ready to acknowledge themselves to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, 1 Tim. i. 15. Eph. iii. 8. If they have been of any use for the advancement of God’s glory and the interests of Zion,—they attribute all to the praise of sovereign grace. “ By the grace of God, “ (says Paul,) I am what I am ; and his grace, which “ was bestowed upon me, was not in vain ; but I laboured more abundantly than they all : yet not I, “ but the grace of God which was with me.” 1 Cor. xv. 10. It is their nature, as renewed by divine grace, to observe our Lord’s direction ; *When thou doest alms, or any good deed, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth.* Mat. vi. 3. But the less account they make of themselves or of their good works, God makes the greater account of both. “ Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly : but the proud he knoweth afar off.” Psal. cxxxviii. 6.

[3.] We may consider them as *small* works. What we mean hereby is, That none of their good works, though ever so small, though it were no more but the giving of a cup of cold water to one of their fellow-disciples,—is forgotten with their Lord, but shall be kindly remembered by him in the day of reckoning as he expressly assures us, Mat. x. 40,—42. xxv. 34.

40.—When one considers the distressing necessity under which his suffering servants have sometimes laboured—of being even in this manner ministered unto,—and how reproachful and even hazardous it has been to own them, or to do them the smallest kindness,—with the great interest which the glorious but sympathising Head takes in all their distresses and sufferings ; when one considers these things, I say, he will see the peculiar propriety and beauty of such encouraging promises.

[4.] We may consider them as *intended works*. The wicked have it in their hearts, to do a deal of more mischief than they have either ability or opportunity to do. And the righteous have it also in their hearts, to do a deal of more good than God requires at their hands or gives them occasion to do. And God will reckon, both as to one and the other, that it is done ; and reward it accordingly. As to both, see Eccles. xii. 14. “God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” As to the malignant intentions of the wicked, see Isa. x. 7. “Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so,”—as God means and thinks ; “but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few,”—far more than God permits him to destroy or cut off. As to the kind intentions of the righteous, see 2 Cor. viii. 12. “If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.” David did but intend to build God an house ; and God assured him he would build him an house, and establish his throne to him and his seed for ever,—as you read in 2 Sam. vii. 1,—17. Accordingly, our Lord Jesus, who is David’s Son and Lord, is sitting upon his throne,—*to order it, and establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever.* Isa. ix. 7.

[5.] We might consider them as *registered works*. As all the ill works of the wicked are registered, I may say, in dooms-day-book,—the black book of conscience,

the book of the fiery law, and the book of God's unerring remembrance ; and as they shall be judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works,—that is, shall be condemned and punished, proportionably to the demerit of their crimes : So all the good works of the righteous are carefully and kindly registered in the book of life, and in the book of God's everlasting remembrance ; and they also shall be judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works,—that is, shall be acquitted and glorified, their good works vouching for their interest in the Redeemer's righteousness, which is the all-deferring ground hereof. See Rev. xx. 12.—It may be, they have forgotten them, or never adverted to the value of them, or God's taking any notice of them,—as is intimated in the account which our Lord gives of the procedure of the great day : “ Lord, when saw we thee an hungred and fed thee, &c.” But the blessed Judge took a kindly notice of them—at the time of doing them, and keeps them in his remembrance, Mal. iii. 16, 17. Nay, and he will surprise them with a favourable mention of them before assembled worlds of angels and men. Thus what is now spoken in the ear in closets, and never imagined to go farther,—shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops, or rather, from the great white throne.

2. We shall now consider the import of these works following those that die in the Lord.

(1.) This may perhaps bear, That however lightly esteemed they were when alive, their memory shall be precious when dead. Generally speaking, the wicked are most praised, when they are in the world,—but their memory rots, as they rot : And the righteous are least esteemed, when they are in the world,—but their memory grows more and more precious, so far as Providence transmits the knowledge of them to posterity. This is Solomon's observation, Prov. x. 7. “ The memory of the just is blessed : but the name of the wicked shall rot.” This is such an ill-natured, envious and malignant world,—that it is an extremely rare thing, for an eminently faithful and useful man, to be valued

valued according to his worth,—nay, or to escape obloquy and reproach ; while he is alive. But readily providence may order matters so, that he shall be highly esteemed, when he is gone. Perhaps even his enemies shall be obliged to reverence his memory. The world shall at least know the value of him, by the want of him.—It is commonly said, That the *judicious* Durham was but little valued in his life-time ; but his memory is *precious* now,—and will be so, while the English language lasts, in the esteem of all who are blessed with a capacity and opportunity to read his valuable works.

(2.) While the good works of those that die in the Lord are here said to follow them ; this manifestly supposes, That they do not go before them,—as the ground of their acquittance before God, or admission into the New Jerusalem. It is through their dying in the Lord, in a state of union to him, as the fulfilling Head of the new covenant,—that they are blessed in their death. This last favour, as much as the first, depends intirely on sovereign and free grace, venting through the propitiation of Christ's blood. Even after the most eminently holy life, heaven is as much of grace, as regeneration. Remarkable to this purpose is Rev. vii. 14, 15. “ These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb : Therefore are they before the throne of God.” All of them were endowed with the spirit of holiness ; many of them had been distinguished for good works ; and some of them had died martyrs for the testimony of Jesus. But were any of these, or all of them, the ground of their admission to the mansions of everlasting bliss ? Nay, they had to wash their robes, their performances as well as their persons in the blood of the Lamb : And it was only as washed and made white in his blood, that they were admissible and admitted into the Divine presence.

Let Papists and other legalists (for all legalists are but Papists at bottom, or at least are in imminent danger of becoming Papists, on a proper temptation being laid in their

their way ; let such, I say), trust in and boast of their [pretended] good works, as they will ; genuine Christians, those that really and only do good works, dare neither boast of them, nor trust in them. " If I justify myself, (says Job), mine own mouth shall condemn me : if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul : I would despise my life." Job. ix. 20, 21. Though they cannot but do good works,— as having the law of God written on their hearts, which powerfully but sweetly constrains them to pay all regard to the law of God written in their Bibles ; they cannot plead them as the ground of their access to God's throne of grace now, far less will they dare to plead them at his throne of judgment hereafter.

Take the man after God's own heart for an example, " Enter not, (says he) into judgment with thy servant : for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Psal. cxliii. 2. " As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy : and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple." Psal. v. 7. They know their title to blessedness now and hereafter depends entirely on the everlasting righteousness of the Surety ; and proportionably to the distinctness and vigour of their faith,— they know, that their title to all blessedness on this immovable ground is ay sure and ay the same. " Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth : who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii.

33, 34.

[3.] These words, however, plainly imply, That the good works of those who die in the Lord are admitted as evidences of their title on the sure ground just now mentioned. Good works in all that are capable of them, and genuine holiness in all,—characterise the persons who are admissible into the New Jerusalem ; because they characterize the persons who are really invested with the law-magnifying righteousness of Jesus all such, and none but such, being capable of good works.

works, or made partakers of the spirit of holiness: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God."— "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. viii. 8, 9. See Tit. ii. 11,—14.

So if the question be, Who have a title to the heavenly inheritance? The answer is, Those who are in Christ, united to his person, and clothed with his righteousness. And if the question be, How shall such prove their title? The answer is, By good works, or genuine holiness. This is the same thing that is commonly said, That our justification is evidenced by our sanctification: And it is the same thing that is said in Rev. xxii. 14. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."—The right there spoken of, not being a right acquired, but a right manifested. In a word, the representation which our Lord gives of the procedure of the great day, is the plainest illustration hereof. He'll pronounce his blessed sentence on all the righteous; "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:" As if he had said, I know you are intitled to it; "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, &c." Mat. xxv. 34,—40.

THE CONTRAST, &c.

REV. xiv. 13.

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

SERMON IV.

WE will all, in a very few years, be either in heaven or hell. The besom of death will soon sweep us, as easily as a few motes on the floor, off the face of this

this earth ; into a world of the utmost extremity of weal or woe. There is nothing more certain, than death ; and there is nothing more uncertain, than life. It is said, when one was asked, Whether the living or the dead were more ? he returned this answer, You must first tell me, *in which number I must place seamen*: hereby intimating, that there was but very little between them and death. But just such is the situation of us all. If we be not dead, we can scarce be said to be alive, while we have not the assurance of another moment. We hang continually over the bottomless abysses of eternity, by the brittle thread of life ; which, continual observation might tell us, the slightest accident may break ere ever we are aware. — But what an alarming call is this, to diligence in the improvement of our gospel-privileges ! We have yet an opportunity of getting into Christ the Lord, though we cannot tell how short it may be. And all blessedness or misery depends on being in him, or not,—as in the text now again read.

After what has been said, on former occasions ; we may now see,

1. The truth of *Solomon's* maxim, Ecclef. vii. 1. “The day of death is better than the day of one's birth.” It is not so, indeed, as to all. Nor is it necessary to the truth of a proverb, that it hold true in all, but only in many, cases.—It cannot be so, as to those who die out of Christ. The day of their death is so far from being better than the day of their birth, —that it is only the beginning of their sorrows, even of everlasting sorrows. As our Lord says of the traitor, it had been good for them, if they had not been born. Having no interest in the alone remedy for sin, they must die in their sins ; which is to be cursed and miserable for ever.—But it is so, as to all that die in Christ. The day of their birth is the day of their entrance into a world of sin and sorrow, of vanity and deceit, of uncertainty and woe ; wherein the end of one snare and trial is readily but the beginning of others ; and wherein they are very commonly as a vessel tossed

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with wind and wave, and every moment in hazard of shipwreck. What comforts they do enjoy, that are worth the speaking of, are all derived from the believing prospect of dying in the Lord. But the day of their death is the day of the end of all their trials and tossings, of all woe and want, of all sinning and suffering. It is the day of their going home to the kingdom of God, in which righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost reign through everlasting ages. In one word, the day of their birth is the day of their beginning to die ; the day of their death is the day of their beginning to live.

2. That death is not so frightful, as it is commonly apprehended to be. It is impossible indeed to describe the frightfulness of dying out of Christ ; but it is as impossible to conceive the blessedness of dying in Him. To die out of Christ,—is to be haled by the executioners of God's justice, the devil and his angels, in-chains or under all the guilt and power of sin, to the prison of hell ; to lie there till the judgment of the great day. To die in the Lord,—is to be carried by the blessed angels, those friends of Christ and of all that are in him,—home to the better country, that is, the heavenly. When sinner is lying on his death-bed, there are, I may say, multitudes of evil spirits, those hellish fiends, hovering, as it were, about his house and bed,—as ever the ravens croaked about the dead carrion ; ready and greedy to devour their prey, and carry him away to the prison of darkness with themselves. When a saint is lying on his death-bed, there are in like manner multitudes of good angels, those ministering spirits, faithfully waiting about his house and bed ; ready and longing to carry him as on eagles wings to Abraham's bosom.—Death to the sinner is just his having his eyes shut on all friends and all enjoyments, and lifting them up in hell, being in torments. Death to the saint is nothing worse or more than his closing his eyes on an evil world, and opening them in eternal glory ; or turning away his eyes from weeping and sorrowful friends, to an innumerable company

pany of angels and to the spirits of just men made perfect; — nay, and to God and the Lamb.

Moses calls this life a *Sleep*, Psal. xc. 5. The sinner sleeps on in security, and pleases himself with many golden dreams of happiness in this world and the next; and never awakens, till he die, and find all his dreams to have been fatal deceits. *Death is as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold he is faint, and his soul hath appetite.* The saint is mercifully awakened, it is true; yet is he but, as it were, half awakened,—and so is often disturbed with frightful and terrifying dreams, dreary apprehensions of God's anger in this world and the next: But in death he is thoroughly awakened; and on awakening, he sees all those dreary apprehensions to have been groundless,—and instead of finding himself encompassed about with sore distresses or distressed friends, he perceives himself all well, in the presence of God and the Lamb, and encircled about with an innumerable multitude of the heavenly host.

There is a word in Gal. iii. 10. “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,”— —that is the death of all sinners. Divine patience, long abused by them, gives way to the exercise of incensed justice; so the curse of the law falls on them, and bruises them to death. There is a word in John xvii. 24. “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory,”— —that is the death of all saints. Such is Christ's love for them, that he can want them no longer, and therefore sends for them home.

Death is like a black and dreary river between this world and the next. But our Lord Jesus, in his passage through it, built a safe and sure bridge over it. The bridge is his own everlasting righteousness. God bears the most ample testimony to the sufficiency of it. He assures us, we need not be afraid to venture along this bridge.

bridge into the eternal world. " Thus saith the Lord " God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, " a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." Isa. xxviii. 16. Nevertheless, multitudes, through ignorance of God and themselves, think it far safer to trust to a bridge of their own building, their own good doings and good exercises; and trusting to these, instead of the bridge of God's laying, they plunge over head and ears,—and never know where they are, till they find themselves in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. But all those in whose consciences and hearts it hath pleased God to reveal Christ, as Jehovah our righteousness,—trusting wholly and only to the bridge of his everlasting righteousness, on the credit of the divine testimony concerning it,—find a safe and sure passage along the same, into Immanuel's land.

Death, it is true, is a thing we are utterly unacquainted with. We know what affliction of various sorts is; and we know what a recovery out of affliction is. Yet none of us know what it is to die. And none of our friends or acquaintance who have departed this life, come again to tell us what it is. But our Lord Jesus, our most sympathizing and faithful friend, really went thro' death, and as really returned again. And he gives us a true, but far from being a frightful description, of it. He tells us, though it was originally a devouring foe, it is vanquished; that though it had a killing sting, he has plucked it out; that though it was against us, it is now for us,—even among the good things, in the Christian's inventory. " All things are yours,—whether life or death." 1 Cor. iii. 21, 23.

3. That there is no reason why Christians should be impatient, fretful or discontented,—under present toils, losses and crosses. They will all be presently terminated in everlasting rest and blessedness. What though they be in the mean time hard to bear; the blessedness to follow them, will be a superabundant counterbalance to them all, and make them all be eternally forgotten. The very first draught of the water of life will make them forget their poverty, and remember

their misery no more. What though they have to wait long for the promised deliverance and blessedness,—under hardships which to a blind world appear insupportable ; and without much experience of the begun accomplishment of the promise, to support and encourage their hearts under them ;—the blessedness laid up for them in the covenant of promise, is well worth the waiting for, even under manifold pressures and discouragements ; especially, as it is insured to them, beyond the possibility of their coming short of it. “ Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth : “ yea, saith the Spirit.” A trifle, an uncertain trifle, is not worth the waiting for ; but all possible blessedness, and that inviolably secured too, is infinitely well worth all our patience.

Nay, what though the road should become more and more dreary,—and the last stage of it, a passing through the valley of the shadow of death, be the most dreary of all ;—one does not grudge to travel even a tedious and uncouth road, for the sake of what will be of stead to him all his life-long ; and shall Christians grudge to travel through all difficulties, hazards and deaths,—when every step they advance, and every difficulty they get through, is as much progress made towards their heavenly Father’s house.

Let Christians comfort themselves and one another, with the assured prospect of an happy outgate from all tribulations ; and the full and everlasting enjoyment of God and the Lamb.—Let carnal worldlings, who can see no farther than time and time’s things, please themselves with the deceitful promises of the world, as if they could at last be of some steady comfort to them. This is the way in which carnal and unbelieving folks support themselves under their troubles. If it be ill with them now, they look fondly forward to the time when they hope it will be well with them. As they lose one worldly comfort, they eagerly grasp (if they can) at another ; like a man plunging through a mire, without finding sure ground whereon to stand. And thus

thus their life is at best one continued round of groundless hopes, and cutting disappointments.

But let not Christians imitate them herein. Such a comfortless way of dragging through life is certainly not to be envied. In opposition hereunto, let Christians terminate all their prospects on the world to-come. Let them place none of their happiness in this world, and then they will not have the mortification of being deceived by it. But let them assure themselves of all blessedness in the other and better world. And let their hopes rise ever so, they shall never be ashamed of them. "For the needy shall not always be forgotten ; " the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever."

Psal. ix. 18.

In this manner *Moses* fought his way through all difficulties ; he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Heb. xi. 27. Nay, in this way, the Apostle tells us, all Christians may and do get comfortably through : " For which cause we faint not ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day : For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory : While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." We may further see,

4. Whence and how it is, that the saints sometimes even long to depart. They cannot help shrinking at death,—as being a dissolution of nature ; a leaving of the dear body for being laid in the gloomy mansions of the dead, and being there eaten up of worms,—and a launching out into the bottomless and shoreless ocean of eternity. They are flesh and blood, as well as their unbelieving neighbours. Even the human nature of our Lord shrank at it, though he was infinitely willing to die.—But they are tired of a sinful and troublesome world ; they are burdened with a body of sin and death ; and they long for that blessedness of which they have in the mean time some taste. They have such a desire to be

be with Christ, as makes them willing to depart, and venture through the dreary and darksome vale. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." 2 Cor. v. 4. It is with them as it is with one who has a dark and gloomy river betwixt him and home: He shudders at the thoughts of entering into the deep waters; yet such is his desire to be home, as makes him willing to venture through the same.

5. That there is no reason why Christians should sorrow above measure for their dying or deceased godly relations. They *rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.* They are better with the Lord, than with us; inconceivably more happy in the blissful vision and full fruition of God and the Lamb,—than in this vain, deceitful and ensnaring world. The day of their death was their best day,—unspeakably better than the day of their birth, or of their greatest prosperity. Why should we grudge, that the almost shipwrecked vessel is got safely into the harbour, never more to be tossed by wind or wave. Let us not envy them the happiness of getting home to the kingdom of God before us, but make all haste to follow them. See Heb. vi. 11, 12. We must drop a tear as a tribute due to their precious memory; but we may at the same time relieve ourselves with the pleasing hopes of a speedy meeting with them, in far greater joy than our parting was sorrowful.—Let Papists who ignorantly dream, that their deceased friends are thrown into purgatory, or no one knows where, sorrow even to distraction,—as well they may. But let not Christians sorrow as those that have no hope.

6. Good reason why we should be thankful, and abund in thankfulness to kind providence,—for the inestimable privileges which we enjoy, and the comfortable prospect which they open into the world to-come; I mean, our glorious privileges as Protestants. While Popery, as you heard, opens such a frightful and horrible prospect, as may well make both the ears of

of every one that heareth it to tingle ; Protestantism opens the divine cordial of the *holy Scriptures*,—and thence draws such relieving supports in life and death, as may make the hearts of all to rejoice. Protestantism sets forth before all, saints and sinners, the cursed death of the Lord Christ,—as the sure ground of faith and hope, peace and comfort, in life and death ; and of everlasting blessedness when time and time's things shall be no more. Thus our all for time and eternity is wrapt up in it.

Therefore let us never forget God's bringing us out of *Antichristian Babylon*, which *spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt*,—with a mighty hand and outstretched arm. Let us never forget his hitherto maintaining us in the possession of our Protestant privileges, in spite of all the efforts of hell and Rome to deprive us of them,—nay, and notwithstanding the indifference of multitudes about some of the most valuable parts of them. Let us always remember the good security which he has given by his gracious promise, that, come what will, we shall not be totally and finally denuded of them. And let us evidence our gratitude, by laying out ourselves, in all the ways that providence opens before us, for the maintenance and defence of them ; particularly, by giving all diligence to improve them. A people who improved their spiritual privileges, never were deprived of them ; and never shall.

7. Good reason why Christians should be diligent in doing good works, and in abounding in them. This is a good preparative for dying ; and, as just now hinted, the appointed method, for securing the continued possession of our privileges. And we have the highest encouragement to be *stedfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*. Why, the inheritance is sure ; insured by the death of the Surety, Isa. liii. 11.—insured by the promise of God in him, 1 John ii. 25. We have only to run to the possession of it. “ So run, that ye may obtain.” 1 Cor. ix. 24. And who would not run for such a glorious prize,—upon such a sure venture ; or rather no venture at all, but the

the highest assurance. " Let us run with patience
 " the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus
 " the author and finisher of our faith ; who, for the
 " joy that was set before him, endured the cross, de-
 " spising the shame, and is set down at the right hand
 " of the throne of God," *whither as the forerunner*
he is entered for us. Heb. xii. 1, 2.

Again, all the toils of a present world, and all the
 toils attending the performance of duty in our present
 infirm state, will soon be at an end. Even these
 very toils have in the mean time their advantages, their
 inestimable advantages ; they are turned into blessings.
 So wonderful is the dispensations of grace,— that they
 are made subservient unto our sanctification ; or, which
 is the same thing, to our progress in that very course
 of holiness which they would seem fitted only to im-
 pede. They are God's furnace for purifying and
 sanctifying us, Zech. xiii. ult. And grant them to be
 very troublesome blessings,—Christians will soon be a-
 bove the necessity of them ; being soon to arrive at
 the stature of perfect men in Christ, able to serve God
 day and night, without ever wearying, or needing any
 other refreshment than what lies in their work.

Moreover, a going on to fight the good fight, and
 to finish our course,—is not indeed our charter to the
 heavenly inheritance ; but it is our evidence for it :
 And who would not wish, not merely to have a good
 charter, but to be sure about it, and to have all his
 doubts and scruples about it resolved and cleared ? Ve-
 rily, when once it comes to the trial on a death-bed,
 the most diligent of us all will be heartily sorry that we
 have not been more so. *We desire, therefore, that*
every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full
assurance of hope unto the end ; that ye be not slothful, but
followers of them who through faith and patience in-
herit the promises. Heb. vi. 11, 12.

We shall now conclude in a particular prosecution of
 this advice.

(1.) We exhort you to the lively exercise of grace,
 of all grace.—How came Popery into the world ? How
 came

came people, endowed with the exercise of reason and blessed with any knowledge of the Scriptures, to swallow Antichristianism,—with its innumerable monstrous absurdities, foppish superstitions, and unnatural idolatries*? When people had lost experience of the power of godliness, retaining only the empty form, of it,—they became a ready prey to all the deceits of Satan. And Popery is eminently a work of Satan. In the days that Popery stole in upon the Church, it did not suit their interest or credit, to cast off the profession of Christianity. But having lost all taste for genuine Christianity, they became easily contented with the shadow. Being ignorant of that solid satisfaction, which is to be found in communion with God, in the ordinances of his institution; they became of course fond of such a slighty and pompous worship, as might give some delight to their fancies. They thus became not only disposed to receive the superstitions imposed on them, but greedy of more. And God, as a righteous judgment on them, gave them up to the lusts of their own hearts. This is the account which the Apostle gives of the matter, 2 Thess. ii. 10,—12.

This might be a loud alarm to the present gospel-despising and indifferent generation. They are wofully asleep, dreadfully drenched in the epidemic distemper,—who do not observe, That this generation, notwithstanding the clear light of the gospel, and many laudable improvements in knowledge,—are, to a very great degree, sunk in security and stupidity as to all spiritual concerns. This makes them a ready prey to all deceivers; and however little they think it,—even to the monstrously incredible doctrines and stupidly foolish superstitions and abominations of Popery. Should any body even them to be Papists; they would readily reply, disdainfully reply, with *Hazael* to the prophet, *What? is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?* Yet as *Hazael* came to be such a dog as to do what he thus professed to abhor; so would they, if left to themselves, and had a proper temptation laid before

* See the Note at the end, No. XV.

before them. So that were it not for the prophecies of Scripture—securing the Church against an absolute inundation of Popery,—we might, for any thing to be seen about this generation to guard them against it, have reason to fear another reign of *The man of Sin.*

But though the Scriptures absolutely secure the Church against this; we do not know but he may come in like a flood, to an almost undoing of the Churches for a time. Matters are not far from foreboding such a thing, at least in these lands; while the generation, by more and more losing all sense of genuine religion, are wofully predisposed to it.—As ever therefore you would prevent such a stroke, or be prepared for sustaining it; make sure work of awakening out of sleep, of girding on your armour, and of standing on your watch-tower. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand.*

Again, consider, that whether this may be your trial or not, you must all meet with death in a short time. *There is no discharge in that war.* The most diligent, lively and assured Christians will have enough to do, under the agonies of death, to support themselves against the disponding fears of their own hearts,—and the furious attacks which Satan (coming down with great wrath—because he knows his time is short) may readily make on them in that trying hour; not to mention that it must require the lively and vigorous exercise of grace, to enable them to bear a honourable testimony to the truths and good ways of the Lord, on that important occasion. What then must become of those who are slumbering and sleeping, when the midnight-alarm is given!

(2.) Particularly, study the assured exercise of faith, Antichrist's *general and doubtful faith* is expressly abjured in the National Covenant of *Scotland.* It is the fixed doctrine of Popery,—that there is no ground in the Scriptures, for the assured faith of salvation. And they had a great interest to serve, by denying it. Should the sure ground which lies in the Covenant of promise, for the assurance of faith, be allowed and inculcated,

culcated,—it would at once spoil their market for pardons, indulgences, priests praying souls out of purgatory, and the like. Our glorious reformers, *Luther, Calvin,* and all of them to a man, were resolute champions for the assurance of faith; and by boldly and steadily preaching and urging this comfortable doctrine,—they made the walls of the Antichristian Babylon to totter from the very foundation, and utterly finished the Pope's market, through no inconsiderable part of Christendom. This frets and enrages him to this day, as you read in Rev. xviii. 11,—19. God grant! that he may never find an opportunity for opening his markets again, through the doctrine of assurance of faith falling into disuse and discredit in the Protestant Churches.

The truth is, when once persons are awakened to see themselves to be the very individuals whom the law curses and condemns; they will not be easy, it is impossible they can be easy,—without getting a sight of the promise of all salvation, as what is spoken to them as specially and closely as ever the threatenings of the law were. And blessed be God! this is to be seen. The promise is to us sinners, Acts ii. 39. 1 John v. 11. And the promise of God in Christ must undoubtedly lay a sure foundation, even for the full assurance of faith. Heb. x. 16,—22. Acts xv. 11. There is thus a stable foundation for the assured faith of all salvation,—not in our own faith or exercise, but in the promise of God who cannot lie. Here is firm ground whereon to stand against all the wiles or cruelties of Popery; nay, even in the hour of death. See Psal. xxiii. 4. While nothing can be more comfortless, than the doctrine which implies,—That notwithstanding all the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, and our diligence in faith and holiness; we must nevertheless be in a state of uncertainty, even in the hour of death,—whether we be going to heaven or hell.

(3.) Endeavour to abound in all the fruits of faith.—
“ Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to tem-

"
" perance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and
" to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly
" kindness, charity :—Brethren, give diligence to make
" your calling and election sure : for if ye do these
" things, ye shall never fall : For so an entrance
" shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the ever-
" lasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
" Christ." 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 10, 11.—It is no won-
der though Papists, who have the holy Scriptures lock-
ed up from them, and who are taught that a well-
grounded certainty of salvation is not to be attained to
in this life ; it is really no wonder, I say, though such
be very negligent in all substantial duties,—nay, grie-
vously drenched in all prophaneness. They have no
excitements to holiness, but what are terrifying ; no-
thing but a horrible uncertainty, which is fitted to dis-
courage all endeavours, and must effectually stifle all
child-like obedience. But let Christians, who have all
possible encouragements set before them,—particularly,
the sure gound of the hope of eternal life ; let such, I
say, distinguish themselves as lights in the world, pro-
portionably to the eminency of their privileges. They
were wont to do so. *And in their mouth was found no
guile : for they are without fault before the throne of God,*
—as we read of them, in the 5th verse of this chap-
ter.

(4.) Endeavour a steady and resolute adherence to
the Reformation Standard ; not merely to the profes-
sion of Protestantism in general,—but to those precious
truths which were avouched by that blessed company
of witnesses, who, at the beginning of the Reforma-
tion, appeared with the Lamb on mount Zion, having
his Father's name written on their foreheads. There
is a woful decline of zeal for these glorious truths,
through the Protestant churches at this day,—as well
as for an united, steady and open avouchment of them;
not to mention manifold grievous perversions of them.
But this is a loud call to all who would approve them-
selves to God, to their own consciences and to the
churches, as genuine and hearty Protestants,—to cleave
to

to them with full purpose of heart, and not to be ashamed of avouching their doing it.

There are, particularly the few following Protestant doctrines, which we would have you steadily to avow.

In the *first* place, and above all, avow the Protestant doctrine, That the true and genuine faith of the *holy Scriptures* is founded, not on the testimony of the Church, but the testimony of the Spirit of all truth speaking in them : And consequently, not on any such *extrinsic* arguments as may be produced for the authenticity of the *Scriptures*, as written by those men whose names the books of *Scripture* do respectively bear ;—but on that *intrinsic* light, power, authority, wisdom, goodness and majesty which shine in them,—and manifest them to be indeed the oracles of the living God. Any other faith is but human ; as *standing, not in the power of God, but the wisdom of men.* 1 Cor. ii. 5.

Avow the doctrine of man's original depravity, or incapacity, without regenerating grace, to do what is spiritually good ; or to prepare himself for it. The doctrine of Free-will, or capacity to do what is really good in God's sight,—is almost equally held by Pelagians, Papists, Socinians and Arminians ; but was detested by all Protestants at the Reformation. *They that are in the flesh, cannot please God.* Rom. viii. 8.

Avow the doctrine of the spirituality and perfection of God's law ; as requiring absolutely perfect obedience, in thought, word and deed. The Papists, like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, narrowed the law of God, in their explications of it,—to such a degree, as to give people at least some shadow for the hope of fulfilling it ; by denying concupiscence, and a variety of such things, to be any breaches of it. And alas ! there are many such Papists to be found among professed Protestants at this day. But it is not at the bar of their explications, but of the law of the Most High itself, that we must stand or fall at the great day. And *the law of the Lord is perfect.* I have seen an end of all perfection, says David : but thy commandment is exceeding broad. Think not, says the churches Lawgiver, that

I am come to destroy the law or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Psal. xix. 7. cxix. 96. Mat. v. 17.

Avow the doctrine of justification, through faith alone in the surety-righteousness of Immanuel, as the whole ground of it,—without the works of the law bearing any part whatever in the matter. This is universally known to have been a famous doctrine with all Protestants at the Reformation. The doctrine of justification by works, as rendered meritorious of that estimable privilege by the merits of Christ, or as co-operating with the righteousness of Jesus in the matter,—is doubtless a Popish doctrine, however much it be in vogue at this day. But it is a most comfortless doctrine,—and will be found to be so by all who think seriously, when they come to die. It is impossible that any can find a bottom whereon conscience can without dread and terror rest, in all their own doings, exercises, or attainments. Because it is impossible that the conscience can be so stupified, as to acquit him of guilt. See Rom. i. ult. ii. 14, 15. Nay, even upon their own scheme of faith, repentance and sincere obedience, or whatever else the scheme be,—it is impossible it can altogether acquit him. So long as conscience is conscience, it will, more or less, at times, challenge, accuse and condemn,—till it find rest in what satisfies law and justice.

Avow the doctrine of the appropriation or assurance of faith, as grounded on the sure foundation which God hath laid in Zion,—as was just now explained.

Avow the doctrine of the absolute necessity of the spirit of faith and of all grace,—in opposition to the Popish doctrine of men's preparing or predisposing themselves to the receiving of Christ or of his grace. “The carnal mind is enmity against God : for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Rom. viii. 7.

Avow the doctrine of the absolute necessity of personal holiness,—in opposition to the Popish figment of profiting by the good works of others. *And there shall in no wise enter into the New Jerusalem any thing that defileth,*

defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie ; not even by the help of all the works of supererogation that were ever pretended to be performed, Rev. xxi. 27. Even the righteousness of Immanuel does not save us, cannot save us,— without making us personally holy. How much less the works of worthless man !

Avow the doctrine of Christ's absolute and unrivalled supremacy in his church. The Pope pretends to be Christ's *vicar* ; to have authority to dispense with what he has enjoined, and to injoin what he has left indifferent. In opposition to this blasphemous usurpation, it is a fundamental article of Protestantism, that Christ alone is the Lord of the conscience ; in contradiction to all impositions on it, whether by Pope or Potentate, parliaments or assemblies. “ The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver : the Lord is our King ; he will save us.” Isa. xxxiii. 22. The Reformation was immediately and directly a rescuing of conscience from subjection to any, below the great God our Saviour.

Avow the doctrine of the purity of divine ordinances, as purged of the superstitions and idolatries of Antichrist.

What was called the *Catholic church*, from the very days of *Constantine*, began to wander endlessly in imaginations of their own about the worship of God ; as all will be sure to do, who deviate from the *law and testimony*,—and are not finally determined in all matters of faith and worship too, by that unerring rule. They adopted multitudes of the *Pagan* ceremonies into their worship,—as if heathenism could have adorned Christianity. Their *incense*, their *holy water*, their *lamps* and *candles* in churches—in broad day-light, their *saints days*, their *image-worship*, their *consecration of churches*, their *white vestments*, with innumerable others,—were all borrowed from the *Pagan* ritual *. Besides, a churchman that was anywise eminent, or that fancied himself to be so, imagined such a mode or ceremony to be extremely decent

* See a little valuable piece, intitled, *Papery unmasked*, being the substance of Dr Middleton's celebrated letter from Rome : Wherein the reader will find full-satisfaction in this matter.

decent in the worship of God ; and another thought another to be so, and so forth : till the pure and unadulterated ordinances of Jesus Christ could not be seen, for the insupportable load and confused baggage of mens additions to them. So that as our Lord said of the scribes and Pharisees, *They made the commandment of God of none effect by their traditions.* It is directly on this account, that Antichrist is called *the great whore*, —as having monstrously departed from *chastity* to Christ, the alone Lord and Husband of the Church. And who ever witnesseth or reads of the Popish worship, may immediately observe written on the forehead of it; “ **MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.** ” In opposition hereunto, it is a primary article of Protestantism, That the Bible alone is the rule of our worship. So our glorious Reformers, who cast off the whorish rags of Babylon, purged the ordinances of Jesus Christ of Popish additions, and set up the pure worship of God again in the church ; (on this account, I say, they) are called *virgins, who were not defiled with women*, Rev. xiv. 4.

Avow the doctrine of a steady, explicit and open avouchment of the truths and laws of Christ. This is a famous Protestant principle. It is abundantly well known, or at least might be so ; That all the Protestant churches, on their coming out of Babylon, openly and explicitly avouched their faith, in opposition to the innumerable errors and abominations of Rome. It is a Popish practice, to decline a public and express avouchment of the truth,—any farther than may consist with peoples conveniency, interest or credit with the world. The Pope’s vassals may take *the mark of the beast*, either in *their right hand, or in their foreheads*, Rev. xiii. 16. But Christ’s subjects must all have *his Father’s name written in their foreheads*, Rev. xiv. 1.

In one word, avow the doctrine of the duty of suffering for, rather than of denying, the truth. Thus it is laid of the ancient witnesses,— “ And they overcame “ him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of “ their

" their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. xii. 11. If our religion be worth any thing, it is worth every thing, even our lives. It would be a blessed thing, even to die for the truth ; on a comparison with apostatising from it, even supposing this could be attended with all prosperity in the world. But such is the unnatural cruelty of the Romish dragon, that abjuring Protestantism and receiving his mark, has not even saved Protestants from the flames or more barbarous usages. So this great record might well be written by John in capital characters, —— BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD, FROM HENCEFORTH : YEA, SAITH THE SPIRIT ; THAT THEY MAY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS, AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM.

THE END.

George Turnbull
Lemington July 10th
1780
Mr. O'2

NOTES referred to in the foregoing SERMONS.

NOTE I. Page 41.

The sovereign Pontiff, instead of deriving his succession from Peter, (who, if ever he was at Rome, did not reside there, at least in any pomp or splendour),—may, with much better reason, style himself the successor of the *Pontifex maximus*, or chief Priest of old Rome; whose authority and dignity was the greatest in the republic,—and who was looked upon as the arbiter or judge of all things, civil as well as sacred, human as well as divine: whose power, established almost with the foundation of the city,—was an omen (*says Polydore Virgil*) and sure presage of that priestly majesty, by which Rome was once again to reign as universally as it had done before by the force of its arms. [Popery unmasked, p. 49, 50.] That he claims all power in spirituals, is confessed. That he grasps at no less in temporals, is equally certain: while a great part of the history of Europe, for a thousand years, is taken up in recounting his encroachments on the Civil Jurisdiction of princes; and their struggles to maintain their just rights against him.

NOTE II. Page 43.

Dupin, a candid Popish historian, in his abridgement of the history of the sixth century, says, “The bishops were yet chosen by the people: But the favour of princes made those to be elected who had neither learning, merit nor capacity.” In his abridgement of the history of the eighth century, he says, “There was much ignorance and licentiousness among the bishops and clergy: but the princes laboured earnestly to reform the clergy and the church.—Superstition and ignorance prevailed among the people.” But, on the tenth century, he allows,—it cannot be denied, but that ignorance, vice and irregularity, prevailed in the greater part of the world: It is true, there have been disorders in all ages; but it cannot be said, with any shew of truth, that they were equal to those of the tenth century,—that they spread so far, or were so universal.”

NOTA



NOTE III. Page 44.

The first cordial offered by the Popish priests, is that of *auricular confession*; which, as Dr *Goodman* says [in *A Preservative against Popery*, title viii. p. 15.], — “is an intolerable tyranny and usurpation upon the consciences of men. And this is not all neither; for, besides its burdensomeness in general, it particularly aggravates and increases a man’s other burdens: for instead of relieving perplexed consciences, which is the true and principal use of confessions to men,— this priestly confession, as it is prescribed by the council [of Trent], intangles and afflicts them more; for that enjoins, that the penitent lay open all his sins, even the most secret, although but in thought or desire only, such as against the ninth or tenth commandment, according to their division of the decalogue: Now this is many times difficult enough; but that is not all, he must also recount all the circumstances of those sins, which may increase or diminish the guilt, especially such as alter the species and kind of sin: Now what sad work is here for a melancholy man? All the circumstances are innumerable, and how can he tell which are they that change the species of the Act, unless he be as great a schoolman as his confessor? Besides all this, it may be he is not very skilful in the distinction between venial and mortal sins; and if he omit one mortal sin, he is undone; and therefore it is necessary for him (by consequence) to confess all venial sins too; and then where shall the poor man begin, or where shall he make an end? Such a *camificina*, such a rack and torture; in a word, such an holy inquisition is this business of auricular confession become.”

NOTE IV. Page 46.

The Papists have a strange conceit about the pardon of sin; as if it respected the fault, but not the punishment,— or at most the eternal punishment due to sin, but not the temporal: as if any punishment could be due to it, after the fault was done away; and as if Christ had not borne the whole punishment due to it; and as if the pardon of sin was not a casting of our sins into the deeps of the sea, never more to be remembered against us. (If one should come to a condemned malefactor, and tell him, The King

had pardoned him, but it behoved him nevertheless to be hanged ; he would be in danger of pelting him with his chain, as most cruelly mocking him.)— But Papists have a great interest to serve by this absurd doctrine. Hence arises the necessity of what they call *indulgences* ; which are a sort of pardons, remitting the temporal punishment which is still due to sin,—after God has pardoned it, so far as not to oblige to eternal punishment : as if the Pope, and his indulgence-mongers, could pardon sin more perfectly and thoroughly than the Lord God merciful and gracious.— But how come they to pretend to do such wonderful feats ? Why, they presume, that they have saints among them, who have been so extravagantly good as to do a deal more than was incumbent on them, by way of satisfaction for their own sins,—saints who could not only merit heaven for themselves, but help others ; that the Church is possessed of the rich treasure of their merits ; and that the Church has authority to deal out of this treasure of merits, (for a good round sum of money to be sure),—pardons and indulgences to those who do not chuse to do sufficient penance for their own sins.— But if people will neither be at the expence of indulgences, nor do sufficient penance for their own sins,—or if they shall happen to commit sin, after the priest has pardoned them, or neglect to make a full and particular confession of their sins ; dreadful is the woe that awaits them in purgatory,—it may be for thousands of years according to the merit of their offences.

NOTE V. Page 47.

Popish writers are excessively puzzled to tell what purgatory is. Even the council of Trent shunned defining it. They are particularly perplexed to tell where it is ; what sort of a fire it must be that can affect pure spirits ; and what must become of those who have not fully satisfied for their sins, when the day of judgment comes. However, the account here given of it is not more dismal than all of them will agree to.

NOTE VI. Page 47.

Turretin, in his system (vol. III. Loc. 20. Q. 12.), tells us from the famous *De Thou*, That one *Cotton*, a Jesuit, prayed to the devil himself, to shew him a text of scripture for proof of purgatory, for he could find none. His conscience, it seems, told him it was a desperate cause.— But *Piche-*

rellas,

rellus, a Papist of the Sorbonne college, is abundantly more to be commended ; who ingenuously confessed, that the Apostle John had, in these few words, (Rev. xiv. 13.), put out the fire of purgatory. See the *Protestant's Companion*, p. (mishi) 97. — Few of them, it is to be supposed, believe there is any such thing as purgatory,—however much they endeavour to terrify the poor deluded people by it, for their own base ends. Remarkable to this purpose is a witty saying of Cardinal Richlieu's, as reported by Archbishop Wake, [in *A Preservative, &c.* tit. viii. p. 116.] : His eminence, who minded one day to puzzle his chaplain, proposed this question to him : *How many masses would serve to fetch any soul out of purgatory ?* To which when he appeared, as well he might, unable to reply,— The Cardinal thus pleasantly solved the doubt ; *That just so many masses would serve to fetch a soul out of purgatory, as snow-balls would serve to heat an oven.*

NOTE VII. Page 47.

The common opinion is,—That as very good men, who have neither any venial, nor mortal sins, to satisfy for, go directly to heaven when they die ; and bad men, who are under the guilt of mortal sins, go directly to hell : With all who are indifferently good, that is, who have only venial sins, or the temporal punishment of mortal sins, to make satisfaction for ; what is wanting of a compleat satisfaction for these sins, while they lived,—must be made up in purgatory.— But, according to Popish principles already explained, particularly in the last preceding note but two, and in the note on *auricular confession*,—no man who believes the doctrine of purgatory, can have any assurance but he is going to it when he dies.— However, after all, this is really a matter of no great consequence ; because, as will be afterwards shewn,—while Papists deny the doctrine of the assurance of faith, none of them can have any assurance but that they are going to hell itself.

NOTE VIII. Page 51.

" On the day appointed for the *massacre*, the *Irish* appeared in arms ; and having secured the principal gentlemen, and seized their effects,—they murdered the common people in cold blood : Forcing many thousands to fly from their houses and settlements, naked, into the bogs and woods ; where they perished with hunger and cold. " Some they whipped to death ; others they stript naked, " and

" and exposed to shame; and then drove them like herds
" of swine, to perish in the mountains. Many hundreds
" were drowned in rivers; some had their throats cut;
" and others were dismembered. With some, the execrable
" villains made themselves sport; trying who could hack
" deepest into an Englishman's flesh. Husbands were cut
" to pieces, in presence of their wives; wives and young
" virgins abused in the sight of their nearest relations:
" Nay, they taught their children to strip and kill the chil-
" dren of the English; and dash out their brains against
" the stones. Forty or fifty thousands were massacred af-
" ter this manner, in a few days,—without distinction of
" age, sex or quality; before they suspected their danger, or
" had time to provide for their defence. In a few weeks
" the insurrection was so general, that they took possession
" of whole counties; murdering the inhabitants, plunder-
" ing their houses, and killing or driving away their cattle.
" Multitudes of poor distressed creatures and families fled
" naked and half-starved,—first to *Dublin*, and from thence
" to *England*; with death and despair in their coun-
" tances." Neal's history of the *Puritans*, vol. II. p. 501,
502.—It is easy to suppose, the number of the slain could
not be exactly ascertained. It is certain, however, that it
must have been very great; as they ravaged almost the
whole kingdom, except the city of *Dublin*. Some suppose
the number to have been two hundred thousand; and others
even between two and three hundred thousand.

Having mentioned one *massacre*, it may not be improper to give a short sketch of another; the famous massacre of *Paris*, on occasion of the marriage of *Henry*, the young king of *Navarre*, a Protestant, and the French king's sister,—in the year 1572. The heads of the Protestants were invited to celebrate the nuptials at Paris; with the infernal view of butchering them all, if possible, in one night. And, in the midst of caresses and all imaginable assurances of friendship, many thousands were barbarously murdered, by the French king's express order; nay, he even assisted in it. Among others, *Coligni*, admiral of *France*, was butchered by the basest russians; his naked body insulted, his head cut off, and sent as a present to *Rome*,—where it was received with great demonstrations of joy. And, as *Bennet*, in his *memorial* (p. 103.), tells us from *Foulis*,—“ The messenger “ that brought the first news of the monstrous fact, had the “ reward given him of 1000 crowns; the letter was read

" in the conclave, their churches resounded with *Te Deum*,
 " the cannons discharged, bonefires made, a jubilee publish-
 " ed throughout all Christendom : A grand procession was
 " undertaken to the church of St Lewis; where were the
 " nobility, bishops, cardinals, several ambassadors, the Pope
 " himself under a canopy, his train being held up by the
 " Emperor's ambassadors ; and the better to retain in me-
 " mory this glorious fact, the Pope had it painted about
 " his great hall in the *Lateran*, and there recorded in
 " marble." — About ten thousand were massacred in one
 night, at Paris ; and twenty thousand more in other parts
 of the kingdom, within the compass of a few weeks : no
 distinction being made between lords, gentlemen, justices,
 lawyers, scholars, physicians and the meanest of the people ;
 they spared neither women, maids, children in the cradle,
 nor infants in their mother's womb.

NOTE IX. Page 51.

Voltaire, (in his *history of the Age of Lewis XIV.* vol. II.
 p. 217.) says,— " Near fifty thousand families, within the
 " space of three years, left the kingdom ; and were after-
 " wards followed by others. — Thus France lost about five
 " hundred thousand inhabitants." — And considering the
 unheard-of barbarities exercised on them at home, they
 would have accounted it a singular mercy, to have escaped
with the skin of their teeth. But guards were placed on all
 the frontiers of the kingdom, to prevent their obtaining
 that inestimable privilege. " The frontiers were guarded,
 " (says the above-mentioned author), with all possible care,
 " to prevent the flight of those who were designed to be
 " re-united to the [Romish] church." — Mean while
 thousands of dragoons were ordered to march through the
 country, with clergymen at their head, for the conversion
 of those who could not make their escape : " And such as
 " continued obstinate, (says *Voltaire*), were given up to the
 " mercy of the soldiers, who had every licence except
 " that of killing : yet many were treated with so much
 " cruelty, as to die soon after of the usage they had re-
 " ceived."

It may not be amiss to give a specimen of this *Dragonado*,
 as it was called, from *Quick's Introduction to his Synodicon*,
 p. 130, 131. " Amidst a thousand hideous cries and blasphemies,
 " they hang up men and women by the hair or feet, upon the
 " roofs

" roofs of chambers, or hooks of chimnies, and smoked them
 " with wisps of wet hay; and when they had taken them
 " down, if they would not sign an abjuration of their pretend-
 " ed heresies, they then truis them up again immediately.
 " Some they threw into great fires, and would not take them
 " out till they were half roasted.—They bound them as
 " criminals are when they are put to the rack, and in that
 " posture putting a funnel into their mouths, they poured
 " wine down their throats till its fumes had deprived them
 " of their reason; and they had in that condition made them
 " consent to become Catholics. Some they stripped stark
 " naked, and after they had offered them a thousand in-
 " dignities, they stuck them with pins from head to foot.
 " They tear them by the noses with red hot pincers. They
 " keep them waking seven or eight nights together; in case
 " they began to nod, they threw buckets of water in their
 " faces; or holding kettles over their heads, they beat on
 " them with such a continual noise, that those poor wretches
 " lost their senses. If they found any sick,—they beat up an
 " alarm with twelve drums about their beds, for a whole
 " week together without intermission, till they promised to
 " change. In some places, they tied fathers and husbands
 " to the bed-posts, and ravished their wives and daughters
 " before their eyes. From others they plucked off the nails
 " of their hands and toes. They blew up men and wo-
 " men with bellows, till they were ready to burst.—If
 " any, to escape the tyranny of these cannibals, endea-
 " voured to fly away, they were pursued and hunted in
 " the fields and woods, and shot at as so many wild beasts."
 Thus, as the foresaid Voltaire says, " It was a kind of
 " chace carried on within a large enclosure."

NOTE X. Page 51.

Dr Wilcox, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, in a letter to
 Dr Burnet Bishop of Salisbury, of Jan. 15. 1706, attests he
 saw an instance of this. " The execution, (he writes) was
 " very cruel. The man (whom he saw burnt) was alive in
 " the flames above an hour. The present King and his bro-
 " thers were seated at a window so near, as to be ad-
 " dressed for a considerable time in very moving terms by
 " the man as he was burning. But though the favour he
 " begged was only a few more faggots; yet he was not
 " able to obtain it. They who are burnt alive here (at
 " Lisbon), are seated on a bench twelve foot high, and
 " fastened

" fastened to a pole, and above six feet higher than the faggots. The wind being a little fresh, the man's hinder parts were perfectly wasted ; and as he turned himself, his ribs opened before he left speaking, the fire being recruited as it wasted, to keep him just in the same degree of heat."

I am sensible, however, that matters are considerably altered, since the above letter was written. The power of the *Inquisition* both in *Spain* and *Portugal*, is greatly abridged. The *Jesuits*, those furious zealots for persecution, and who have not been improperly called the *Tanistry* of the Pope,—were some time ago banished out of *France*, *Spain*, *Naples*, and *Portugal*; and at last the order itself, on the repeated solicitations of the secular powers, abolished by the Pope. The papal power has thus been coming fast down, for about thirty years bygone ; it is hoped, through the fifth angel's beginning to pour out his vial on the seat of the beast.

But this makes no alteration at all, in the genius of the Popish religion. The ten horns are wiser, for their own interests, than to give their power to the beast as they were wont to do. Yet this says not, that the beast himself is not as ambitious of it as ever. The truth is, a disposition to persecute is inlaid in Popery. People having once drunk of the golden cup of the great whore's fornications, they are bewitched with a burning desire that others may partake with them in it. And being tormented, tormented to the quick, by the testimony of faithful witnesses against them ; they cannot help being full of rage, fury and cruelty against them.

Nor is the civility of the manners of the age, any argument against the truth of this remark. *Voltaire*, in his foresaid history (p. 214.) observes ; " It afforded a strange contrast, to behold such cruel and merciless orders (those referred to in the preceding note) issued from the bosom of a voluptuous court, eminent for softness of manners, the graces, and all the endearing charms of social life. There are still extant, (he tells us,) several letters under the hand of the Marquis de Luvois, dated in the year 1685 ; and conceived in these terms : It is his Majesty's pleasure, that such as refuse to conform to his religion be proceeded against with the utmost rigour,—and that not the least indulgence be shown to those who affect the foolish glory of being the last to comply." Thus we see what is to be expected from civil good-natured Papists.

NOTE

NOTE XI. Page 52.

To manifest the truth of this charge, I shall here present the reader, with a copy of the *Romish Creed*; commonly called the Creed of *Pius IV*,—as having been published and imposed by his *Bull*, in *November 1564*;—containing a summary of the decrees of the Council of *Trent*. This Creed, after twelve articles in which all Christians are generally agreed, proceeds as follows :

“ I most stedfastly admit and embrace the apostolical and “ ecclesiastical traditions, with the rest of the constitutions “ and observations of the Romish Church.”

“ I also receive the holy Scripture according to the sense “ which the holy mother Church (whose it is to interpret “ it) hath held and doth hold; nor will I ever understand “ or interpret it otherwise, than according to the unani- “ mous consent of the fathers.”

“ I profess also, that there are seven true and proper sacra- “ ments of the new covenant, instituted by our Lord Je- “ sus Christ, and necessary to the salvation of mankind, “ (though not all of them necessary to every man), viz. *bap- tism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony*; all which do confer grace; and “ whereof *baptism, confirmation, and orders*, cannot be re- “ peated without sacrilege.”

“ I likewise receive and admit all the received and ap- “ proved rites of the Catholic Church, in the solemn admini- “ stration of all the foreaid sacraments.”

“ All and every thing which was defined and declared “ about *original sin and justification* by the most holy council “ of *Trent*, I embrace and receive.”

“ I profess likewise, that in the mass is offered to God a “ true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and “ dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucha- “ rist, there is really and substantially the body and blood, “ together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus “ Christ: And that there is a conversion made of the whole “ substance of bread into his body, and of the whole sub- “ stance of wine into his blood; which conversion the Ca- “ tholic Church calls *Transubstantiation*.”

“ I also confess, that under either kind or species only, “ whole and entire Christ and the true sacrament is received.”

“ I constantly hold, that there is a purgatory; and that “ the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the “ faithful.”

“ As

" As also, that the saints, who reign together with Christ,
" are to be worshipped and prayed to ; and their reliques
" to be venerated."

" I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, of the
" blessed Virgin, and of the other saints, are to be had and
" retained ; and that due honour and worship is to be im-
" parted to them."

" I also affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by
" Christ to his Church ; and that the use of them is most fa-
" litary to Christian people."

" I acknowledge the holy Catholic and Apostolic *Roman*
" Church to be the Mother and Mistress of all churches :
" And I promise and swear true obédience to the Pope of
" Rome, who is Christ's vicar ; and successor to St Peter
" the prince of the Apostles."

" I also without doubt receive and profess all other
" things delivered, defined and declared by the sacred ca-
" nons and ecumenical councils, especially by the most holy
" council of *Trent* ; and all things contrary to them, with
" all heresies whatsoever, condemned, rejected and cursed
" by the Church, I likewise reject and condemn and curse."

" This true catholic faith, without which no man can be
" saved, which at present I freely hold and profess, I will
" (by God's help) constantly retain and confess intire and
" inviolable to my last breath ; and take care, to the utmost
" of my power, that the same shall be taught, held and pro-
" fessed by all under me, and whose care shall belong to
" me in my office. I the same N promise, vow and swear
" it. So help me God, and these holy Evangelists."

This monstrously incredible Creed, all who enter into
holly orders, as they speak, are obliged to swear and sub-
scribe.—This was the Creed, which the poor persecuted
Protestants in France were enforced to subscribe ; and
which they therefore very properly and emphatically cal-
led *the mark of the beast*.

NOTE XII. Page 57.

By the Act here referred to (the *Quebec Act*),—" The
" Romish clergy are to have the exercise of their religion,
" subject to the King's supremacy, as established by the
" first of Queen Elizabeth ; and may enjoy and receive
" their accustomed dues and rights, from persons professing
" the Romish religion : With a proviso, that his Majesty
" shall not be disabled from making such provision for the
" support and maintenance of a Protestant clergy as he
" shall

"shall think fit." [Annual Register for 1774.]—Thus, the parliament provides for the *Popish* clergy; but leaves it to the arbitrament of the Sovereign, to provide for a *Protestant* ministry as he shall see cause. The latter are upon their good behaviour.—So that, I am afraid, the remark of the city of *London*, in their petition to the King not to give his royal assent to this bill, was but too just: "That the Roman Catholic religion, which is known to be "idolatrous and bloody, is established by this bill; and no "legal provision is made for the free exercise of our re- "formed faith." See *Reflections, &c. by a Freeholder*; commonly supposed to be Dr *Erskine*, one of the ministers of *Edinburgh*, p. 38,—47.

And an Act was passed in the last Session of Parliament, ["for relieving his Majesty's subjects professing the Popish religion within England, from certain penalties and disabilities imposed on them by an Act in the 11th and 12th years of the reign of King William III."] ;—which particularly repeals "so much of the said Act as relates to "the apprehending, taking or prosecuting *Popish Bishops*, *Priests*, or *Jesuits*; and also so much of the said Act as "subjects *Popish Bishops*, *Priests* or *Jesuits*, and *Papists*, or "persons professing the Popish religion, and *keeping schools*, "and taking upon themselves the *education* or government "or boarding of *youth* within this realm, or the dominions "thereto belonging, to perpetual imprisonment."—And by Act of Parliament to declare *Popish Bishops*, *Priests* and *Jesuits* relieved from punishment,—on account of professing the Popish religion, keeping school, and taking upon them the education or government or boarding of youth,—is much the same thing, as to give them licence and authority to do so.

NOTE XIII. Page 61.

It may not be amiss to give the following short sketch of this masterpiece of the mystery of iniquity,—from Jurieu's history, or rather his abridgement of Father Paul's history of the Council of Trent, p. 3. "It was a kind of tribute (he tells us), that "took its rise in the Church about the eleventh century; "and owes its original to the *Croisades*, which were made "at that time for the conquest of the holy land. Urban II "granted indulgences to all that would list themselves un- "der the cross, and engage in that expedition. In subse- "quent *Croisades*, the same indulgences were granted to "those who, not being able to go in person, did send a
"soldier

" soldier to the holy war : At length those who desired the benefit of the indulgences, but would neither go nor send to the war, purchased their exemption by money. In process of time, whenever the court of Rome stood in need of money, they published a distribution of indulgences in favour of all that would contribute to their necessities. Then were rates set on sins ; and he that had a mind to compound knew what he was to pay, for the crime he desired a pardon for."—And this, it is very well known, was the immediate occasion of the Reformation by Luther.

Not to swell this note with an account of different Popes instigating all to undertake Croisades against the poor Albigenses, by solemn promises of the full forgiveness of sins and meriting heaven thereby ;—We shall satisfy ourselves with giving an instance nearer home. One Parry, who was to have assassinated Queen Elizabeth in the year 1585, (as Bennet in his *Memorial*, p. 101, 102, tells us from Foulis),—received a letter from Cardinal Como ; in which he told him, "That his Holiness commended his good resolution and disposition that he had towards the common good, exhorted him to persevere and bring to effect what he had promised : And that he might be the more assisted by the good Spirit which had moved him thereunto, his Holiness granted unto him his blessing, plenary indulgence and remission of all sin,—assuring him, that, besides the merit he should receive in heaven for so doing, his Holiness would make himself debtor to him on earth." And this had great influence on the wretch, as we are told from his own confession : "The enterprise (says he) commended and allowed, and myself absolved in his holiness's name of all my sins, and willed to go forward in the name of God ; it confirmed my resolution to kill her, and made it clear in my conscience that it was lawful and meritorious."

NOTE XIV. Page 66.

A notable instance of far crueler usage than death, happened in France.—January 23, 1685. " A woman had her sucking child snatched from her breasts, and put into the next room, which was parted only by a few boards from hers. These devils incarnate (the dragoons) would not let the poor mother come to her child, unless she would renounce her religion and become a Roman Catholic,

" tholic. Her child cries, and she cries. Her bowels
 " yearn upon her poor miserable infant ; but the fear of
 " God keeps her from apostasy. However, she suffers a
 " double martyrdom,—one in her own person, the other
 " in that of her sweet babe ; who dies in her hearing,
 " with crying and famine,—before its poor mother."

[*Quick's Introduction to his Synodicon*, p. 154.]

Take another instance from the same author, p. 111.
 " The Curate and Sexton of the parish, visit an aged per-
 " son upon his death-bed. They drive from him all his
 " children ; terribly threatening them that, if ever they
 " came near him any more, they should be hanged. These
 " poor creatures, terrified with these and other persecu-
 " tions which they had already suffered, fled into the
 " woods ; not daring to return, to assist their afflicted fa-
 " ther. In their absence, the old man stands his ground
 " stoutly ; against all the assaults, temptations and vexa-
 " tions of the irreligious Curate and Sexton : and finding
 " they could not prevail upon him, they at last forfave
 " him. This poor man was now left succourless, and dies
 " of famine : For, when he was found dead, he had eaten
 " the flesh off his hands for hunger."

NOTE XV. Page 91.

It need not seem strange, that we should lay such a heavy charge against the Church of *Rome*. If ever Papans were guilty of this monstrous crime, Papists are every whit as much so. Nay, a great part of their worship is nothing other or better than the ancient heathen worship, with scarce a Christian face put on it.—Thus as the heathens, along with one supreme *Jupiter*, worshipped multitudes of inferior gods ; so do the Papists. See 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. They worship angels and saints, particularly the Virgin *Mary*. And this is the very thing that the Apostle prophesied of, 1 Tim. iv. 1.—“ In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils ” *Doctrines of devils*, or rather, of demons, inferior gods. Canonized or deified saints are here called *demons*, as having the same place in the Popish worship, which demons had in the Pagan worship. Whenever the Pope is pleased to canonize one, that is, to inrol him among the saints ; he becomes intitled to have churches, altars, &c. and to be addressed as an intercessor with God : Even as the heroes of the heathens were, on being

Consecrated to him

being supposed to be taken into the number of the gods : nay, and they had their forms of deifying or canonizing, exactly parallel to those of the Pope. [The reader may find full proof of all this in *Popery unmasked*, p. 19, &c.]

— But, as Dr Freeman observes, [in *A Preservative against Popery*, Tit. vi. p. 179.] — “ If at any time his infallibility should chance to mistake, as I am pretty sure he has more than once done, (and some Romanists themselves have granted, That the Pope’s canonizations are doubtful and subject to error, *Bell. de Beat. Santi*. L. i. c. 7, 8) ; the members of that church are in a sweet case,—and are not only in danger of invoking saints, but devils also ; which is idolatry with a witness, and by their own confession.” — But the worship they give the other saints, is inconsiderable, in comparison of what they pay to the Virgin *Mary*. They worship her more than God. For they say ten prayers (if they be prayers) to her, for one to God himself ; ten *Ave Marias*, for one *Pater noster*. This is the proportion observed in their *Rosaries*. — Nay, they worship stocks and stones, made indeed into a kind of images : Paying the very same sort of worship to them, that the heathen idolaters did ; and sometimes worshipping the very same individual images too,—only under a Christian, but similar, name.—

And, as if they would outdo the very heathens, they worship the *relicues* of their saints and martyrs,—their *clothes*, their *hair*, their *bones*. In the times of Popery, a piece of an old rotten bone said to belong to some famous saint (real or fictitious, it mattered not), would have sold at a most enormous price. And they never wanted plenty of those trinkets, to vend to their blind admirers. This is a principal part of that merchandise, the loss of which by the Reformation is lamented, in Rev. xviii.

Farther, they worship the *cross*, the wood of the cross said to be still preserved ; and in sufficient quantities, to be sure. On *good Friday* every year, a cross is brought forth, and held up in the most tragical manner, as an object of worship to the people ; who fall down prostrate before it accordingly. [See *Archbishop Wakes Exposition of the doctrine of the Church of England*, p. 19.]

Nay, they act more brutishly than ever the heathen did. They worship the very bread they eat ; the *host*, as they call it, the *consecrated wafer*. Upon the absurd supposition, that the bread and wine are *transubstantiated* into the

the very body and blood of our glorious Redeemer, they worship the same. And this, as every body knows, makes a great part of their worship. This, as Mr Patrick relates [in A Preservative, &c. Tit. viii. p. 249, 250.] made one *mahometan* say,—“ That he found no sect worse, or more foolish, than the Christians; who tear with their teeth, and devour that God whom they worship :” And another observe,—“ Those words of Christ, *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, Christians understand literally;* and so Christians are more cruel against Christ, than the Jews;—for they left Christ when they had slain him; but these eat his flesh, and drink his blood,—which, as experience testifies, is more savage.”

All this is in order to an idolatry, every whit as ridiculous and brutish as all the rest,—the worship of the *beast, the great whore with seven heads and ten horns.* Upon the supposition that the Pope is Antichrist; and most part of Protestants believe him to be so: This is expressly charged upon them in 2 Thess ii. 4. Rev. xiii. 4, 8.—Papists worship the Pope, inasmuch as they ascribe that honour to him which is due only to the Most High. They acknowledge him to be Christ’s vicar; to be *his Holiness;* The council of Trent gave him the title of *Sanctissimus dominus noster, our most holy Lord.* They worship him, particularly inasmuch as they acknowledge his *infallibility*,—and rest their faith on his *ipse dixit*, instead of *Thus saith the Lord of hosts.* For whether the Pope or a council, or the Pope and a council agreeing, or the church catholic difusive, be infallible; Papists are sure, it is somewhere in their church: And whoever is acknowledged to have it, is hereby manifestly worshipped.—Though, by the bye, it happens most unluckily for them, this infallible visible Judge of all controversies, in whose decision all must rest on pain of damnation,—has never been able to determine this greatest of all controversies, without the decision of which he can be good for nothing; namely, Who he is, or where he is to be met with.

END OF THE NOTES.







